



## CHAPTER 1

# Toward an Eighteenth-Century Ontology of Ancient Sculpture

The sculptor's arms are flung wide in awe (fig. 8). Chisel still clutched in his outstretched hand, the fixity of his gaze and the dramatic interruption of his work telegraph to the beholder that this is no usual studio scene. Rather, it is an instant of miraculous transformation, as the pallid, inanimate marble figure before him is overtaken by the roseate glow of living flesh. It is only a matter of time, the painting proposes, until those blank, unseeing eyes are endowed with sight and those limbs with movement. In its artful unfurling of the narrative of Pygmalion and Galatea, Laurent Pécheux's 1785 canvas takes its place alongside a remarkable number of pictures devoted to the subject in the second half of the eighteenth century. Like representations of the tale of Zeuxis, the narrative echoed foundational myths of artistic origins. In this instance, questions of mimesis loom



FIGURE 8 Laurent Pécheux, *Pygmalion and Galatea*, 1785. Oil on canvas. The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Photo © The State Hermitage Museum (Vladimir Terebenin).

large. In Ovid's telling, Pygmalion's carved female figure stands for, and indeed emphatically displaces, actual women—even as the tale powerfully frames what will prove an enduring theme for centuries to follow: the intertwined nature of artistic creation and desire.<sup>1</sup>

Eighteenth-century pictures like Pécheux's have been compellingly linked to period materialist discourses on living matter or, rather, on the capacity for matter to live and to feel. One particularly vivid episode concerns Jean le Rond d'Alembert's query in 1769 about the difference "between a man and a statue, between marble and flesh," to which Diderot famously replied, "Not much. Flesh can be made from marble, and marble from flesh."<sup>2</sup> Pécheux's canvas suggests another related line of inquiry by organizing the Pygmalion narrative specifically in relation to antique sculpture. Here, Galatea is none other than the Venus de' Medici. In its staging of sculptural encounter and sculptural transformation broadly construed, with implications for both sculpture and beholder, the painting provides a rich point of departure for a chapter that aims to trace how *thinking* the antique took distinctive shape in the eighteenth century.

By the time of Pécheux's canvas, encounters with ancient figural sculpture had long lent shape and meaning to the grand tour, even as they were framed by new preoccupations and expectations. This chapter isolates the key qualities that came to define experiences with antique figural sculpture in the mid-eighteenth century. The eighteenth-century ontology of ancient sculpture outlined in what follows turned, I will argue, on three defining conditions: mobility, mutability, and the capacity for transformative experience. Mobility references the physical movement of antiquities: their unearthing, transport, installation, and display. Taking off from

Perrier's 1638 engravings, I follow the physical displacement of antiquities as well as their virtual circulation via diverse technologies of reproduction. The eighteenth century witnessed the efflorescence of practices of reproduction, replication, and translation trained on ancient sculpture: from drawing and painting to engraving, plaster casts, and porcelain. Prints, casts, and copies all played instrumental roles in an emergent history of ancient art, as is evident, for example, in the early publications of Winckelmann and Herder.

If it is true that in the eighteenth century the "antique existed in and through its copies," this is not, however, to foreclose on the second term, mutability.<sup>3</sup> In reference to the decades following the discoveries of Herculaneum and Pompeii, Quatremère de Quincy later remarked: "Never, within a similar period of time, have so many antique remains been brought to light. . . . There were no limits to the hopes and expectations of those interested in the arts. Who knew where the discoveries might lead? . . . Crowds of statues emerged from the ruins of the classical world."<sup>4</sup> In response, networks of antiquarians, sculptors, and dealers intervened to modify, transform, and render anew what were, in many instances, merely fragments of sculptures. The antique Cupid and Psyche group excavated near Hadrian's Villa in the early eighteenth century is a powerful case in point. While the sculpture is now lost, a drawing by Pompeo Batoni commemorates how the saccharine embrace, rendered familiar by the related Capitoline group, was transformed through its restoration into a lover's violent recoil (see figs. 23 and 24).<sup>5</sup>

Whereas Batoni's drawing marks a striking departure from innumerable representations of the Capitoline Cupid and Psyche group, mutability might also be understood in terms of



morphological variations among representations that took the same objects as their subject. Blanchet's grisaille series from 1765 at Saltram House is exemplary insofar as it demonstrates the remarkable plasticity of form as it was moved through materials: from marble, to drawing, to engraving and painting. As Blanchet's depiction of the Hermaphrodite attests (see fig. 3), even the slight modification of a commonly held vantage point could nevertheless be harnessed to startlingly transformative ends. Works like this prepare us to consider what was at stake when artists probed sculpture's unique capacity for being seen in the round—viewing that moves at once over time and across space—since what could be seen was constantly shifting, often with striking effects.

Such pictorial representations explored sculpture's faciality, or sidedness, in order to unsettle the idea of the medium's moribund stasis and to make the familiar strange. These dynamics had new power in the eighteenth century, thanks to the concerted theorization of the transformative possibilities of aesthetic encounter. This last vital characteristic of an eighteenth-century ontology of the antique permeated writing about sculpture in the period, from philosophical texts to tourist diaries. Provoking the possibility of animating the spectator and/or animating the sculpture, encounters with the antique were underwritten by a sense of these objects' time-collapsing properties, qualities that powerfully dovetailed with a post-Winckelmannian emphasis on sculpture's special, and distinctly material, historicity. In the eighteenth century, I want to insist, art's capacity to invoke "living presence," a property that has been posited as a transhistorical aspect of works of art, took on very particular shape and power.<sup>6</sup>

In tandem with detailing the eighteenth-century ontology of the antique, the first part of the

chapter traces a variegated landscape of beholding sculpture in reference to a series of evocative pictures that took significant form in the cosmopolitan setting of Italy in the second half of the century. The second part of the chapter introduces three episodes in which an orientation to questions of mobility, mutability, and the capacity for transformative encounter prove particularly salient. The chapter moves from Robert's and Natoire's drawings of antiques in the newly opened Capitoline Museum, as well as Barry's and Grandjean's depictions of the mesmerizing effects of the Capitoline Antinous and Belvedere Torso, to Herder's and Goethe's delight at the firsthand scrutiny of prized antiquities. These key images and texts speak to myriad modes of sculptural encounter, whether artistic, touristic, philosophical, or admixtures thereof.

At the same time, such practices of looking, copying, imagining, and depicting suggest the promises and perils of sculptural admiration that so often hinged on identification between viewer and sculptural object, as well as the potential for the viewing subject's transformation. Patch's resolutely unbeautiful depiction of grand tourists and ancient sculpture in his *Dilettanti in a Sculpture Hall* (ca. 1760–61) directly addresses this tension. This monumental picture offers, with palpable relish and humor, a sort of ground plan of the varied taste-performing and taste-making practices at the heart of contemporary artistic and tourist cultures in Italy. If, as Pêcheux's painting suggests, the beholder came to be understood as a vital component of the work of art and, indeed, may be said to complete the art object, these experiences of transformative viewing were particularly charged when viewers came face to face with antique figural sculpture. The myth of Pygmalion and its thematization of marble's

materiality provides a germane starting point for my exploration of an eighteenth-century ontology of the antique.

### THE MYTH OF PYGMALION AND THE FLESH OF MARBLE

In his entry “Sculpture en bronze” for Diderot and d’Alembert’s *Encyclopédie*, Louis de Jaucourt remarks, “The number of statues of all sizes that the ancients made in bronze, is almost incredible.” But despite the fact that, as Jaucourt emphasizes, in antiquity bronze played an outsized role in both the making of and writing about sculpture, by the eighteenth century, classical sculpture was overwhelmingly associated with the medium of marble.<sup>7</sup> And while sculpture more broadly encompassed a range of mediums—including terracotta, plaster, porcelain, and bronze—marble was the quintessential material for reflections on the art of sculpture. Consider Diderot, who, in 1765, tellingly reduced the art to a single medium. Having described sculpture as that “most philosophical art,” an art of profundity and stasis, he offered the scathing summary: “No laughter in marble.”<sup>8</sup> No further elaboration was necessary thanks to sculpture’s synecdoche, marble. By the early decades of the eighteenth century, the art of sculpture was strongly associated not only with marble but also with touch, line, and the antique. Lichtenstein provides the foundational account, in which Roger de Piles plays a primary role in retooling the associations foundational to long-standing paragone debates. As she demonstrates, post-de Pilesean discussions of sculpture were intimately connected to “debates about the status of antiquity.”<sup>9</sup> A century after Diderot’s formulation, critical attacks on sculpture proliferated in no small part because the medium

was so thoroughly bound up with its perceived Greek origins. In the German context, it has been observed that “it would be no exaggeration to see antiquity . . . as identical with *the statue*,” an elision telegraphed, as Catriona MacLeod observes, by Goethe’s 1804 juxtaposition of romanticism not with classicism but, rather, with the “plastic” (*das Plastische*).<sup>10</sup> The “death of sculpture” could not only be imagined but emphatically asserted, thanks to its thoroughgoing identification with its classical incarnation.<sup>11</sup> In its eighteenth-century construal, antique sculpture was, above all, associated with figuration in the guise of gods, heroes, and warriors. In the hands of past masters, marble had been rendered with such virtuosity that it appeared as if human flesh.

The miraculous mechanics involved in the transformation—or perhaps better, metamorphosis—of marble into quasi-human flesh emerged as a noteworthy enthusiasm of the eighteenth century. Drawing on the narrative made famous by Ovid, the subject of Pygmalion’s animated statue flourished in the visual arts as it did in literary and philosophical treatments. Beginning in the second decade of the eighteenth century, a strategic and consistent sleight of hand is evident across the many painted renditions of the Pygmalion myth. In paintings by a wide range of artists, from Jean Raoux’s 1717 canvas to Jean-Baptiste Regnault’s from 1785, the modification is clear. In Ovid’s account, “With extraordinary art / From snowy *ivory* [Pygmalion] formed a girl, of beauty more than human, and fell in love.”<sup>12</sup> And yet, surveying the paintings, there is nary an ivory girl to be found. Before she is flesh, Pygmalion’s beauty is emphatically materialized in *marble*, just as the sculptural figure is definitively life-scale.<sup>13</sup> In this sense, paintings of the period repeatedly elide the double metamorphosis—of materials and scale—in

Ovid's myth.<sup>14</sup> In scenes like Pêcheux's, human-sized marble takes center stage, and its transformation from hard, gleaming white surface to yielding, rosy flesh is the main event (fig. 8). In Pêcheux's rendition, Galatea is in the midst of coming to life, feet first; the frozen orbs of the statue's eyes and the hard gleam of her breast are distinguished from the warmer tones of the figure's "living" abdomen and legs. Meanwhile, Pygmalion kneels before Galatea/Venus, arms thrown out in a pantomime of awe at the "miracle of animation" unfolding before him.<sup>15</sup>

The exchange of Ovid's ivory for marble in depictions like Pêcheux's may well speak to the axiomatic nature of marble to the very idea of sculpture. In this sense, its depiction reinforces the allegorical valence of images that take up something like sculpture's primal scene. In representations of the Pygmalion myth, sculpture's dimensionality is at once linked to the medium's mimetic capacities as well as its unique material qualities. Whether its origins lie in bone, horn, or tusk, Ovid's ivory is a soft, relatively malleable, organic material. Aside from its famed deployment in colossal chryselephantine sculptures such as the Athena Parthenos, ivory was frequently used in the creation of objects on a diminutive scale, as in the case of ancient ivory dolls.<sup>16</sup> Marble is a quite differently evocative substance, distinctly positioned to serve as that most resolutely *inanimate* material, all the better to contrast with the warmth of flesh.

In eighteenth-century reflections on sculpture, whiteness and coldness are repeatedly celebrated as marble's essential material qualities. Setting aside references to marble's diverse colors, like Baron d'Holbach's *Encyclopédie* entry noting that "the colors of marble vary infinitely," Winckelmann famously remarked in his *History of the Art of Antiquity* that "since white is the color that reflects the

most rays of light, and thus is most easily perceived, a beautiful body is all the more beautiful, the whiter it is."<sup>17</sup> Winckelmann's affirmation of the "supremacy of white Greece" is situated within what Philippe Jockey has shown to be a centuries-long "decoloration, that is, white recoloration, of Greek antiquity."<sup>18</sup> Throughout eighteenth-century texts, marble's famed whiteness is understood to invoke the idealized "skin" of Greco-Roman statuary, an association that was thoroughly bound up with ideologies of race and nation in an age of empire.<sup>19</sup> In 1780, in his tenth discourse delivered to the Royal Academy, Joshua Reynolds concluded his reflections on sculpture by placing materials front and center: "The uniformity and simplicity of the materials on which the sculptor labors, *which are only white marble*, prescribes bounds to his art, and teaches him to confine himself to a proportionable simplicity of design."<sup>20</sup> Here, sculpture qua medium was fully reducible to marble in all of its monochrome glory.

The association endured; decades later Hegel would laud white marble as "above all the most appropriate" for sculpture. While he had to admit that other materials had been deployed, whether the granite and basalt favored by the Egyptians or the bronze utilized by the ancient Greeks, Hegel concluded that "marble in its soft purity, whiteness, absence of color, and the delicacy of its sheen harmonizes in the most direct way with the aim of sculpture."<sup>21</sup> While based in an assertion of marble's ability to capture the effects of light and shade with greater subtlety than did other materials, Hegel's privileging of white marble was connected to his broader argument about the essentially abstract nature of ideal sculpture; in its achromy, white marble would allow the maximal perception of sculpture's form.<sup>22</sup>

Hegel's argument was articulated during a period in which marble's meanings and associations were significantly in flux. From its consolidation in the course of sixteenth-century paragone debates, the idea of sculpture had been intimately connected to the material of marble and the assumption of direct carving, which, taken together, distilled an image of platonic creation: out of unhewn stone, the artist's idea would be revealed. In this construal, marble sculpture stood as a point of access—to the individual artist's idea and, as important, to the traces left by the artist's hand in the execution of surface modeling. But by the early eighteenth century, texts by Joseph Addison and Jonathan Richardson acknowledged that classical figural sculpture was bound by serial relations.<sup>23</sup> Increasingly, marble sculpture began to be conceived in terms of its circuits of replication. By 1784, a crucial step had been taken in conceiving of marble as a material of reproduction. In the first volume of the *Museo Pio-Clementino* (1782), authored by Giovanni Battista Visconti with the assistance of his son Ennio Quirino Visconti, marble sculpture was occasionally identified as a copy of a bronze Greek original, as with the Apollo Sauroktonos by Praxiteles, a marble copy of which was part of the Pio-Clementino collections.<sup>24</sup> The second volume, published by Ennio Quirino Visconti in 1784, heralded two new shifts. Faced with sculpture in which excellent conception was paired with less-than-excellent execution, Visconti began to assume the existence of lost Greek originals whose design and execution would have been equally superb. It was out of this emergent set of relations that the fundamentally derivative category of "Greco-Roman" sculpture took shape. Visconti also began to assume the existence of bronze originals "behind" marble sculptures, even in the many cases in which

no such works were documented in ancient texts.<sup>25</sup> As marble was put into new relation to bronze (originals), not to mention the clay models that preceded them practically and conceptually, marble's "originary" status was increasingly destabilized.

The arrival of newly discovered Greek figural sculpture in western Europe accelerated this reappraisal. Pedimental sculptures from the Temple of Aphaia on the island of Aegina acquired by Ludwig I of Bavaria and exhibited in Munich, and the friezes from Bassae and the Parthenon sculptures (exhibited by 1816 in the British Museum), could all be dated to the fifth century BCE. These archaeological revelations stimulated a large-scale reevaluation of Greco-Roman sculpture and set the terms for new historical and stylistic genealogies established later in the century. The new analytic and interpretive methods of *Kopienkritik* (copy criticism), with deep roots in philology and new scientific thought, were formalized by the time of Adolf Furtwängler's 1895 *Masterpieces of Greek Sculpture* and signaled decisively the understanding of marble as the medium of ancient copies.<sup>26</sup>

Whiteness itself was under pressure, thanks to the burgeoning awareness that the Greek sculptures embraced for their achromy would have originally been polychrome. After key archaeological discoveries at Herculaneum (where, in 1760, a statue of Diana was excavated that bore traces of blond hair, along with red and gold decoration on the hem of its drapery), at the Parthenon in Athens, and the temple of Aphaia on Aegina, documentation of ancient polychromy circulated ever more widely.<sup>27</sup> Already evident in Winckelmann's 1764 *History of the Art of Antiquity*, knowledge of sculptural polychromy expanded broadly after 1814 thanks to Quatremère de Quincy's influential *Le Jupiter Olympien, ou l'Art de la sculpture antique considéré*

*sous un nouveau point de vue*, which posited that the Panathenaic procession, the Parthenon's famed relief sculpture that graced the cella's exterior walls, would have been vividly colored. Drawing upon ancient textual sources and firsthand observations in its exposition of what he termed "polychrome sculpture," Quatremère de Quincy's magnum opus was anchored with chryselephantine cult statues, like Phidias's statue of Zeus at Olympia, illustrated in spectacular and chromatically vivid reconstruction drawings by the author.<sup>28</sup>

Ongoing research on ancient polychromy was sustained in large part by the imbrication of scientific archaeology with architectural training, publishing, and design in the hands of such figures as Gottfried Semper, Leo von Klenze, Jacques Ignace Hittorff, and Owen Jones.<sup>29</sup> Despite such popular visualizations as Jones's exhibition of polychromed casts of the north frieze of the Parthenon, displayed in the Greek Court at the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, the subject remained polarizing, and a strong association between marble's whiteness and classical art proved (and to some extent continues to prove) nearly impossible to dislodge.<sup>30</sup> The association of Greece with marmoreal whiteness—conceived at a polar remove from color—was endowed with the appearance of unquestionable rationality in the second half of the eighteenth century thanks to the scholarly and museological ground laid by a burgeoning history of art and public art museums. The stakes and politics of the association are further amplified by Jockey's observation that the moral condemnation of color that surfaces already in Michel de Montaigne's 1580 *Essays* returns in explicitly racialized terms in the middle of the nineteenth century in Arthur Gobineau's *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines*. Much was at stake in the continued embrace of antique sculpture's "illusory whiteness."<sup>31</sup>

Resistance to color was especially virulent in the realm of figural sculpture, as notable efforts by contemporary practitioners attest. While Jones's 1854 "experiment" was roundly criticized, polychromed sculptures by Antonio Canova (*Paolina Borghese*, 1804–8; *Hebe*, 1808) and John Gibson (*Queen Victoria*, 1844; *Aphrodite*, later called the *Tinted Venus*, 1854) were subject to erasure and revision.<sup>32</sup> Canova's polychromed sculptures, like those of Jean-Léon Gérôme, were stripped of their color, not unlike the work of their ancient predecessors. Clearly, the modern history of sculptural polychromy is intimately bound up with the history of chromophobia, one symptom of which has been the violent removal of color from sculptural surfaces. Debates about ancient sculptural polychromy continue into the present, in terms that demonstrate that the aesthetic stakes have always also been politicized and often overtly racialized.<sup>33</sup> The "savage" nature of color invoked by Winckelmann and Goethe maps all too easily onto the logic of the twenty-first-century alt-right rejection of a growing understanding of the richly diverse hues and subjects that populated the ancient world.

In the eighteenth century, the association of sculpture's ideal form with whiteness and intellection took shape within a distinctly racialized worldview of the Enlightenment. If Falconet's assertion of 1761 that "the nude is the principal object of the sculptor's study" proved largely true in European art of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, marble's widespread associations with whiteness, abstraction, and ideal form give the lie to the medium's universalizing connotations.<sup>34</sup> Only specific bodies were conjured by its translucent "skin." Far from abstract terms, references to blackness and whiteness were, as Anne Lafont has recently demonstrated, explicitly tied to notions of



race and questions of morality in eighteenth-century art writing.<sup>35</sup>

The medium of marble brought these associations starkly to the surface, not least thanks to the association of marble with the human body. D'Holbach's *Encyclopédie* entry, for example, defines marble as "ordinarily filled with veins."<sup>36</sup> Again and again commentators invoked the fleshiness of stone, as in Winckelmann's encomium on the subject, which appeared in his discussion of the Laocoön group: "Though the outer skin of this statue when compared with a smooth and polished surface appears somewhat rough, rough as smooth velvet contrasted with lustrous satin, yet it is, as it were, like the skin of ancient Greeks, which had neither been relaxed by the constant use of warm baths . . . nor rubbed smooth by a scraper, but on which lay a healthy moisture, resembling the first appearance of down upon the chin."<sup>37</sup> The transformation of marble into quasi-skin remained the ultimate sign of mastery, even as questions of surface effect took on particular importance in the years following the revelation of the Parthenon marbles' relatively coarse surfaces.<sup>38</sup>

At the same time, marble's metamorphic hardness, opacity, and reflective sheen were situated at a far remove from the softness and translucency of flesh. While the materiality of marble was linked visually and rhetorically to its capacity for lifelikeness, and it was prized in part for its evocation of skin, within its Pygmalion promise of animation lay its opposite: the threat of mortification and the understanding of the marble body as a corpse. If sculpture was "grave and austere," as Reynolds asserted in 1780, the purported coldness of the material loomed large for many commentators.<sup>39</sup> In Rousseau's *Pygmalion*, the sculptor declares his lack of inspiration with reference to the material's

inherent chill, announcing, "The marble emerges cold from my hands."<sup>40</sup> In his Berlin lectures of 1801–2, August Wilhelm Schlegel conceived of sculpture as essentially corporeal, even as his reflections were fundamentally informed by a sense of the mortifying chill of marble.<sup>41</sup> Undergirding François Guizot's repudiation of sculptural painting in 1810 was the critic's invocation of "that idea of immobility or of coldness that is necessarily attached to a statue."<sup>42</sup> Reflecting on his intermedial experiments roughly a century after Rousseau, Gérôme wrote that if he had "from the outset concerned [himself] with the application of color to marble," this was the direct result of the fact that he had "always been frightened by the coldness in the sculptures which, once the carving work is complete, have been left in their natural state."<sup>43</sup> In this, Gérôme was not alone; in his time, the "chill" of marble would be systematically yoked to a sense of its sepulchral and deathly characteristics by such critical figures as Charles Baudelaire, Théophile Gautier, Hippolyte Taine, and Émile Zola.<sup>44</sup>

Despite the consistent assertion of marble's chill and the seductive logic of this association, whereby marble is linked to the antique and thus conceptually with the dead and remote, marble is not inherently cold. Viewed scientifically, these assertions beg the question of marble's relative thermal conductivity. In the context of the art museum or gallery, a sculpture responds to the temperature of the room, which is likely to be lower than a visitor's body temperature. When a warm hand touches marble at a cooler room temperature, how quickly does it draw heat from the human hand? Marble's thermal capacity or the material's absolute value in these terms registers on a spectrum, from materials relatively slow to transmit heat (or cold) to those that do so relatively quickly. Whereas paper registers at the low transmitting end

and silver at the high transmitting end, marble appears roughly equivalent to slate; it is around five times more transmissive than milk but nearly fifty-five times less conductive of heat or cold than bronze.<sup>45</sup> Put simply, in the world of materials, the “touch” of marble is experienced as significantly *less* cold than that of bronze, thanks to the substances’ relative thermal conductivity. This is an extended explanation of a simple but crucial point: the pervasive association of marble with coldness—a pairing that pervades eighteenth- and nineteenth-century discussions, not to mention those of the twentieth and twenty-first—must be understood as a rhetorical argument rather than an exposition of material fact.

For Diderot, the fact that “the material [sculpture] uses is so cold, so refractory, so impenetrable” made it difficult to approximate (human) likeness. On the one hand, the material itself presented a stark challenge to any artist who aspired to “soften . . . this cold, hard material, in order to make soft, sweet flesh of it.” On the other hand loomed the equally daunting association of sculpture in general and marble in particular with the antique. In the decades following the discoveries of Herculaneum and Pompeii, the “antique” took on an entirely new material immediacy, as chapter 3 explores in greater detail. At the same time, it was increasingly tied to a sense of fatality. The magnitude of transforming marble into flesh is evident in Diderot’s response to Falconet’s sculpture *Pygmalion*, exhibited in 1763, “How soft the flesh! No, it cannot be marble!”<sup>46</sup> Rousseau likewise chose his words carefully when his Pygmalion apostrophized, “It’s not at all *lifeless marble* with which I am enamored.”<sup>47</sup> In such examples, the drama of bringing to life assumes—and indeed *requires*—the deadness of stone. Whether summoned in the imagination or through the beholder’s touch, marble tended to be conjured at once as

epidermis and proof of its antithesis: the gelid body as corpse. Of course, it is precisely this gap that is miraculously bridged in the Pygmalion myth, a tale of animation that captured the imagination not only of artists but also of eighteenth-century scholars, philosophers, and writers, such as Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau, and Condillac.

As J. L. Carr has explored, beginning with philosopher André-François Boreau-Deslandes’s 1741 *Pygmalion, ou la statue animée*, this narrative and especially its climax in the animating of marble proved an exceptionally fertile avenue for exploring Lockean empiricism and, in particular, the suggestion that “matter might be able to think.”<sup>48</sup> Voltaire, Diderot, and Condillac may all be seen to follow in Deslandes’s footsteps, since the statue’s first thoughts may be seen as a “tribute to empiricism,” while Pygmalion’s responses “betray allegiance to Spinoza as well as Locke.”<sup>49</sup> In his response to d’Alembert’s query about the difference between man and statue, Diderot asserted the fundamental equivalence between marble and flesh, in an echo of Deslandes’s earlier text. In his 1754 *Treatise on the Sensations*, Condillac’s focus for his radically empiricist reflections on the primacy of the senses in the development of the cognitive capacities in an (imagined) insentient human being explicitly used a statue’s animation as demonstration.<sup>50</sup>

While more specifically focused on paragone debates than his predecessors, Herder, too, harnessed the Pygmalion narrative in his 1778 *Plastik*, subtitled *Einige Wahrnehmungen über Form und Gestalt aus Pygmalions bildendem Traume* (*Some Observations on Form and Shape from Pygmalion’s Creative Dream*). Like Voltaire and Condillac before him, Herder took up the matter of animation in a text shot through with references to the unruly “flesh” of marble. Herder’s book has often been

described as a philosopher's account of sculpture, marked by his ambition to engage Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's 1766 *Laocoön* and to push the argument further in light of the very different experiences between beholding painting or sculpture. Commentators have provocatively noted that Herder's *Plastik* is devoted above all to *touch*, even more than sculpture. Nevertheless, Herder was a product of his time insofar as he assumes that sculpture is antique, figural, marble, and white.<sup>51</sup>

Herder focuses close attention on the subjective and sensory experiences of the beholder, but they do not exist in a vacuum. The text's most frequently cited passage in *Plastik* zeroes in on the "lover of art sunk deep in contemplation who circles restlessly around a sculpture." The passage culminates with the perambulating beholder having resisted the temptation to allow "a single viewpoint" to predominate. As a result, he enjoys a quasi-intersubjective apotheosis in which, crucially, "the sculpture lives" (41). Here, as elsewhere, the text reveals a strong emphasis on animation in such key passages as: "Sculpture creates *in depth*. It creates *one* living thing, an animate work that *stands there* and endures" (44; emphasis original); "A sculpture before which I kneel can embrace me, it can become my friend and companion: it is *present, it is there*" (45; emphasis original); and "The well-proportioned human being is not an abstraction derived from the clouds or composed from learned rules or arbitrary conventions. It is something that can be *grasped* and *felt* by all who are able to recognize *in themselves* or *in others* the form of life, the expression of force in the human vessel" (77; emphasis original). Whereas Herder had earlier stipulated that "a statue must be alive: its flesh must be animated; its face and countenance must speak," nowhere in *Plastik* is touching invoked in the sense of a warm human body coming

into contact with cold, resistant marble.<sup>52</sup> Jason Gaiger has aptly described Herder's "touch" as more imaginative than literal.<sup>53</sup> Nevertheless, *Plastik* offers an ideal model in which sculptural encounter interpellates sculptural surface—that is, marble—as skin. Herder's account is a familiar landmark in theoretical writing about sculpture and his attention to what we might now call the "beholder's share" is well known, but what is crucial to note here is that Herder strategically refutes intimations of coldness to emphasize instead sculpture's *life*. In so doing, and in tilting the deck toward the intersubjective, Herder's analysis leans heavily on the idea of the viewers' experience, which had emerged as a prominent concern in the eighteenth century.

As Herder's text demonstrates, the Pygmalion narrative provided a framework for exploring the processes of transformation that might engage multiple valences of animation. Various renditions of the Pygmalion myth miraculously bridge the gap between inanimate and animate, but this move receives particular emphasis in Ovid's version. As George Hersey has noted, while Ovid is far from the first to narrate the tale, his account is distinctive. Notably, Ovid scrupulously attends to the physiological aspects of the scene of transformation, and not only in terms of the *statue's* development from bone to flesh. In Hersey's estimation, Ovid offers "a new category of artistic effect . . . an effect of livingness that is felt, neurologically, muscularly, in the blood, *by the viewer*."<sup>54</sup> Hersey's analysis is useful for thinking about the traction a specifically Ovidian Pygmalion narrative gained in the eighteenth century, when the account would have resonated with the thinkers cited here and with sensualist philosophy more broadly.<sup>55</sup>

Insofar as it involves Pygmalion's *self-awareness*, in which physiological and psychological response is

stimulated by a work of art, the myth functions as a touchstone for emergent conceptions of aesthetic encounter. At the same time, the narrative lends itself exceptionally well to the terms of eighteenth-century sculptural experience, according to which the viewer takes on an entirely new priority by “completing” the work of art and also often being transformed by it. What an Ovidian-qua-empiricist and sensualist reading of the Pygmalion narrative emphasizes is that such “completion” must be understood as a two-way street, a transformation at once of the work and of the beholder, such as that beautifully attested by Winckelmann’s sublimation (and citation) of the Pygmalion myth in his famed description of the Apollo Belvedere, at the end of which the author assumes the role of “Pygmalion’s beauty.”<sup>56</sup> Our thinking about eighteenth-century depictions of the myth of Pygmalion is significantly enriched by bringing to bear historical developments that have tended to be conceived in distinct orbits. In so doing, this book offers an expanded argument about why we witness the efflorescence of such imagery in just this period.

## MOBILITY

In the eighteenth century, ancient sculpture was on the move, thanks to its unearthing, transportation, installation, and display, as well as its reproduction and replication. The mobility and, indeed, volatility of ancient artifacts were forged in an age of accelerated archaeological activity in Rome and its environs, including locations to the south, above all in the vicinity of the Bay of Naples. As Ilaria Bignamini has observed, in the decades after midcentury, Rome was beyond compare as a center of archaeological activity: “No other place on earth could possibly compete” with Rome, thanks to the

fact that “its inexhaustible sources of antiquities were able to be legally unearthed by citizens of any nation and exported from Rome to any destination in Europe.”<sup>57</sup> A veritable explosion of archaeological activity, led by British excavators Thomas Jenkins, Gavin Hamilton, Robert Fagan, and others, particularly in the periods 1761–79 and 1792–96, has been scrupulously documented by Ilaria Bignamini and Clare Hornsby.<sup>58</sup> Their work has shed light on the networks of Italian and foreign excavators, dealers, and tourists, as well as a series of popes who took advantage of these agents and activities to assemble unparalleled collections of antiquities.

Intimately linked to the exhumation of new finds was a thriving international trade in antiquities, which resulted in what was for some an alarming scale of movement of antiquities from Italy to collections in Scandinavia, Germany, and above all, England. Another form of sculptural movement took place within Rome, where important sculptural works previously held in private collections were physically relocated, becoming newly visible in emergent public art museums. A vivid case in point is the Capitoline Museum, housed in the Palazzo Nuovo on the Capitoline Hill. Unveiled in 1734, the collection comprises select papal holdings, in addition to an extensive collection of antiquities recently acquired from the antiquarian and dealer Cardinal Alessandro Albani by Pope Clement XII (Lorenzo Corsini, r. 1730–40). Clement XII was at once anxious to protect Albani’s famed collection from certain export and to consolidate the explicitly civic address—not to mention the implicit certification of papal power and taste—of these impressive holdings in their new museum situation.<sup>59</sup> Roughly four decades later, in 1770, the Museo Clementino opened, allowing new access to the Vatican’s antiquities. Renamed the Museo Pio-Clementino after 1776,



FIGURE 9 Charles Natoire, *Artists Drawing in the Inner Courtyard of the Capitoline*, 1759. Pen and brown ink, brown and grey wash, white highlights over black chalk lines on tinted grey-blue paper. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo © RMN–Grand Palais / Art Resource, New York (Michel Urtado).



when Pope Pius VI's work with architect Michelangelo Simonetti resulted in the substantial expansion and reorganization of the combined Museum Clementinum and Museum Pium, the resulting museum housed an extraordinary collection, including such masterworks as the Apollo Belvedere, the Laocoön group, and the Hercules Torso.<sup>60</sup>

Sculpture's mobility—its unearthing from the ground and its physical and conceptual movement from private to public collections—resulted in new occasions for viewing by diverse constituencies. Collections like those of the Capitoline, whose public orientation was telegraphed by its location at the seat of civic government, quickly became destinations for art enthusiasts of all stripes, including tourists, artists, antiquarians, and collectors. While far from an archaeologically exacting reconstruction,

Natoire's pen, ink, and chalk sketch of the inner courtyard of the Capitoline captures a panorama of encounters that speaks to the diversity of human activities in and around the collection (fig. 9). In the background, a woman fills vessels with water, apparently oblivious (perhaps through habituation) to the figure behind her: the famed colossal statue of a river god known as Marforio, one of the "speaking statues" whose quasi-animation turned upon poems attached to it by visitors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>61</sup> A man standing to the left of the monumental Egyptian statue of Arsinoe, wife of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, now in the Vatican, appears so struck by the scene in front of him that he is rendered immobile, raising his hand in what appears to be an involuntarily gesture.<sup>62</sup> The drawing equivocates: does the man respond to the woman or the

monumental sculpture behind her? In center middle ground, observed by a visitor with walking stick and cape, an artist sits on a low stool. Caught in the act of sketching, the subject of his attention pushes beyond the limits of what is visible of the gallery on the left side of the sheet. This foursome of figures given over to visual acuity and discernment is rounded out by the performative student or antiquarian at the far left of the composition, who wields a loupe (perhaps unnecessarily) to better consider the sculpture before him.

Natoire's landscape of antiquities and observers is constituted here as an emphatically liminal space between the museum proper and the fabric and rhythms of the city beyond. In this *fantasia*, the collection spills out, as it were, to envelop the monumental anchor of Marforio, which had been moved to the Capitol in the first half of the seventeenth century. In his early image of this watershed space, Natoire insistently troubles the division of inside and outside, inserting the soupçon of the rustic or even pastoral by way of the informal encounter with ancient sculpture framed on the right, a move reminiscent of some of Perrier's early prints of antique sculpture. Adjacent and coexistent with this scene of quasi-natural coexistence of the human and the sculptural are the quite differently engaged and, above all, intensely *looking* figures who populate the left side of the sheet. While these enthusiasts technically did not require formal authorization to sketch, as one would upon breaching the staircase to access the *piano nobile* and the official space of the museum, they nevertheless stand for a range of more and less institutionalized kinds of looking of the period, whether touristic, artistic, or antiquarian.<sup>63</sup>

When Natoire made this drawing, he was serving as the director of the French Academy in

Rome, which was housed in the Palazzo Mancini, where he had previously been a *pensionnaire*. In that capacity, he avidly encouraged his students' study of the antique, which he described as "the most essential" aspect of their preparation.<sup>64</sup> Natoire's investments took many forms, from acquiring marble sculptures and casts after the antique for the French Academy's collection to installing a collection of casts of antique artifacts featuring statues, busts, and fragments in a garden purchased in 1755 to facilitate study by Academy students.<sup>65</sup>

In this Natoire built on the legacy of his immediate predecessor, Nicolas Vleughels, who oversaw the arrangement of the plaster-cast collection unveiled in 1727 at the Palazzo Mancini and for whom the copying of casts functioned as a means of building a "storehouse of memory."<sup>66</sup> Natoire's drawing was thus informed by the artist's firsthand experience and commitment to ensuring the direct access to antiquities for artistic training.

Upon arrival in Rome in 1754, Robert was welcomed into the fold of the French Academy and took up study of the city and its monuments. In a drawing roughly contemporaneous with that of Natoire, Robert frames essentially the same space and assembles many similar figures (fig. 10).<sup>67</sup> By contrast, artistic emulation here emerges as the heart of the matter, both thematically and compositionally. Robert's gallery is visited by mothers and children, gypsies, multiple figures in togas, and even a leaping dog. At the center of this swirl, in a drawing alert to the continuities between the new museum spaces of the Capitoline and collections conceived specifically for artistic training, the artist appears intent, even single-minded, in his work copying the Amazon before him.

Collections like the Capitoline were vital resources for aspiring artists, as they increased



FIGURE 10 Hubert Robert, *A Draftsman at the Capitoline Museum*, 1762. Red chalk on paper. Collections Musée de Valence. Photo © Musée de Valence (Philippe Petiot).



accessibility to objects whose examination had often only been possible through negotiated access with individual collectors or through their reproduction in prints and casts. Robert's red-chalk drawing *Antiquities at the Capitoline Museum* (1762–63) features some of the Capitoline's foremost holdings, among them Cupid and Psyche, Agrippina, and Antinous Osiris, attesting to the emergent star status of a number of the collection's antiquities (fig. 11). At the same time, the strikingly nondescript location and the apparently haphazard organization of the sculptures telegraphs their mobility; it is as if they are glimpsed within a vast storeroom or entrepôt, not yet installed in the context of the museum.<sup>68</sup> The blocks supporting Agrippina dramatize the temporary nature of the sculpture's

situation. As if to further emphasize this point, Robert has assembled sculptures that were, for the most part, newly excavated and thus recently subject to active conceptual and physical movement. While the Agrippina stands as an exception (having been recorded in the Palazzo dei Conservatori in 1659), the Antinous Osiris, excavated in 1739 at Hadrian's Villa, and the Cupid and Psyche, unearthed on the Aventine Hill in 1749, attest to the relatively recent archaeological vintage of the assembled artifacts.<sup>69</sup>

Giovanni Domenico Campiglia's *Artists Drawing the Dying Gladiator in the Capitoline*, published as a frontispiece to the third volume of Bottari's *Del Museo Capitolino* in 1755, summons up a scene similar to Robert's, with sculptures jumbled together in an unceremonious arrangement (fig. 12).



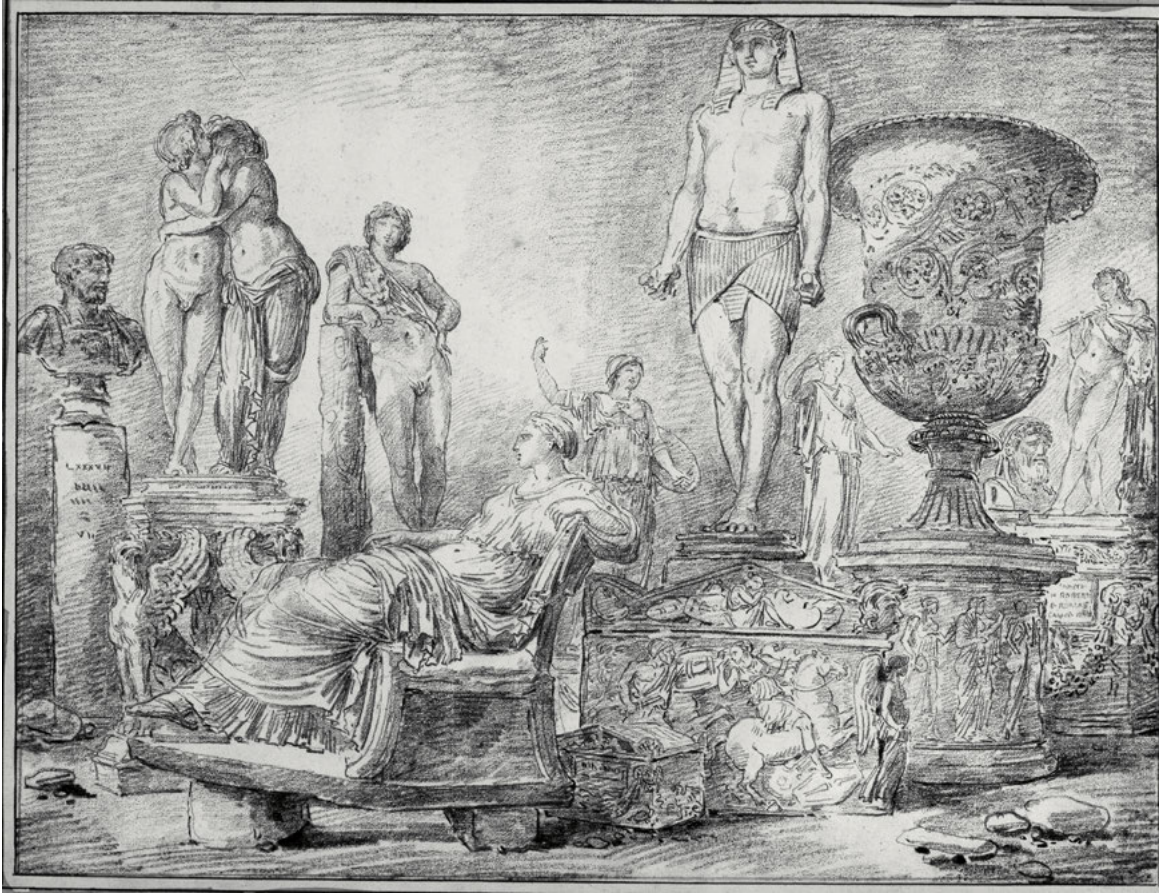


FIGURE 11 Hubert Robert, *Antiquities at the Capitoline Museum*, ca. 1762–63. Red chalk on paper. Collections Musée de Valence. Photo © Musée de Valence (Philippe Petiot).

FIGURE 12 Giuseppe Vasi, after Giovanni Domenico Campiglia, *Artists Drawing the Dying Gladiator in the Capitoline*. Engraving from Giovanni Gaetano Bottari, *Del Museo Capitolino*, ed. Niccolò Foggini, vol. 3 (Rome, 1755), plate 1.

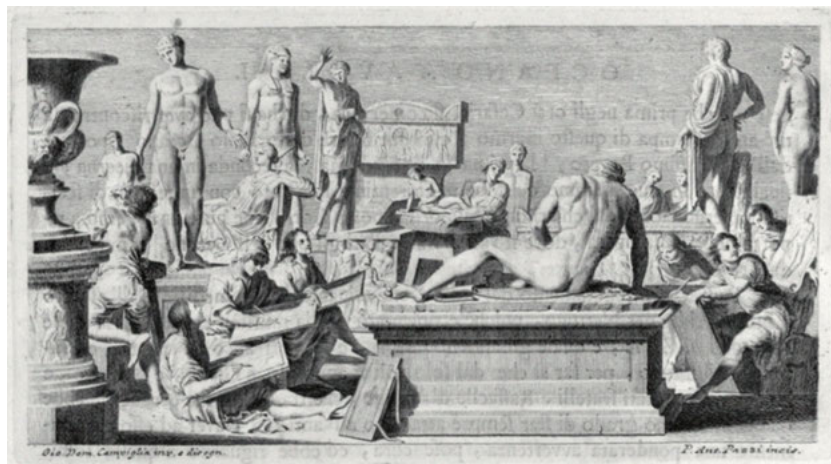






FIGURE 13 Adolph Menzel, *Storage Room During New Construction in the Altes Museum, Berlin, 1848*.

Colored chalk on light brown paper. Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin. Photo: bpk Bildagentur / Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin / Jörg P. Anders / Art Resource, New York.

In addition to its substantial art collections, the Capitoline complex housed the Accademia di San Luca's Accademia del'Nudo from 1754 until the early years of the nineteenth century, an institution frequented by an international cohort of painters and sculptors.<sup>70</sup> Campiglia conjures the Capitoline art collections—albeit not its recognizable galleries—as a destination specifically dedicated to artistic training. Interspersing sculptural and human bodies, Campiglia equivocates between the two, as well as between “original” and “copy,” as demonstrated by the Dying Gladiator in the foreground

and its replicated form in the reduced scale sculpture-in-progress, visible at a distance. With their haphazardly cluttered figures, Giuseppe Vasi's engravings after Campiglia and Robert's *Antiquities at the Capitoline Museum* evoke the arrangement of plaster-cast collections or museum storage rooms like Adolph Menzel's remarkable depiction of a storeroom of the plaster-cast gallery in Berlin from 1848 (fig. 13).<sup>71</sup>

Early museums were far from solely the province of artists, as drawings by Natoire and Robert attest. One of the most evocative commemorations

of the early experience of visiting the Capitoline Museum takes the form of a letter from one antiquarian to another. Writing to the Comte de Caylus, Abbé Jean-Jacques Barthélemy describes the “shock of electricity” he felt “the first time [he] entered the Capitoline Museum.” Far from a private collection or “cabinet,” the museum, as he recounted, “is a dwelling of the gods of ancient Rome; the school of the philosophers; a senate composed of the kings of the Orient. What can I tell you of it? A whole population of statues inhabits the Capitol; it is the great book of antiquarians.”<sup>72</sup> As Pope Clement XII had hoped, artists, antiquarians, and scholars, together with collectors and grand tourists, converged upon the Capitoline by way of varied itineraries that constitute another key valence of mobility.

Blanchet’s portrait of Henry Willoughby commemorates this grand tourist’s visit to Rome in 1754 and bears its own trace of the Capitoline collection (fig. 14). The eldest son of a member of Parliament and his heiress wife, Willoughby notably also sat for portraits by Pompeo Batoni and Anton Raphael Mengs.<sup>73</sup> Blanchet’s portrayal captures the privileged swagger of an elegant sitter bedecked in quasi-regal folds of ermine and velvet. His aquiline features are highlighted by the ray of light that illuminates his forehead and nose, setting its sheen against the relatively shadowed—and by implication here, overshadowed—bust of the Capitoline Antinous, whose head appears as if deferentially bent, to the sitter’s left. Grand tourists like Willoughby were consumers of art, as collectors, viewers, and letter writers. Their strategic self-fashioning in portraits like Blanchet’s suggest how encounters with the antique have left their mark on, and even in, the sitter’s body.

The latter scenario is given exceptionally vivid form in Batoni’s 1764 portrait of Thomas Dundas



depicted in the company of four of the most prized antique sculptures of his time (fig. 15). Made in the “golden era” of the grand tour, between the mid-1760s and mid-1770s, Batoni’s portrait functions as a brilliant distillation of the taste-making that lay at the heart of such travels, whereby young tourists would, often with the aid of knowledgeable guides, self-consciously cultivate the refinement of their taste through firsthand exposure to the ideal forms

FIGURE 14 Louis-Gabriel Blanchet, *Portrait of Henry Willoughby, Later Fifth Baron Middleton*, 1754. Oil on canvas. Private collection. Photo: Peter Horree / Alamy Stock Photo.



FIGURE 15 Pompeo Batoni,  
*Portrait of Thomas Dundas*,  
1764. Oil on canvas. Private  
collection. Photo: Wikimedia  
Commons.



of antique sculpture. Batoni's portrait of Dundas took one of the key destinations, the Vatican's octagonal Cortile Belvedere, which housed the Apollo Belvedere, the Laocoön, the Belvedere Antinous, and the Vatican Ariadne (then known as Cleopatra), to which Dundas pointedly gestures.<sup>74</sup>

Founded in the Renaissance as the Cortile delle statue, the octagonal courtyard represented a powerful point of origin for the Vatican collection of antiquities.<sup>75</sup> Batoni's portrait depicts the space just prior to its transformation in the 1770s under Pope Clement XIV, with the addition of Simonetti's distinctive portico or "peristyle," in the words of a shrewd period commentator. Batoni has edited any reference to what had been a much remarked-upon aspect of the statues' display: the wooden cases whose doors could be opened to reveal the sculptures within.<sup>76</sup> In broad terms, Batoni has strategically transformed what records suggest was a light, open space in which the group of iconic sculptures were situated at regular intervals in the open-air courtyard. Instead, the visual field has been radically telescoped so that the sculptures are compressed in a cavernous surround lit only by a slender bend of blue sky. In this last regard, Batoni uncannily anticipated crucial aspects of the sculptures' exhibition post-Simonetti, in which the theatrical potential of viewers' encounters was fully exploited by the sculptures' placement in individual *gabinetti* theatrically illuminated by oculi. As Jeffrey Collins has observed, functioning like temples or chapels, these *gabinetti* encouraged the sense of an individual's connection with the ancient sculpture, facilitating the aesthetic experience "promoted by Winckelmann and diffused by innumerable touristic guidebooks and travel narratives."<sup>77</sup>

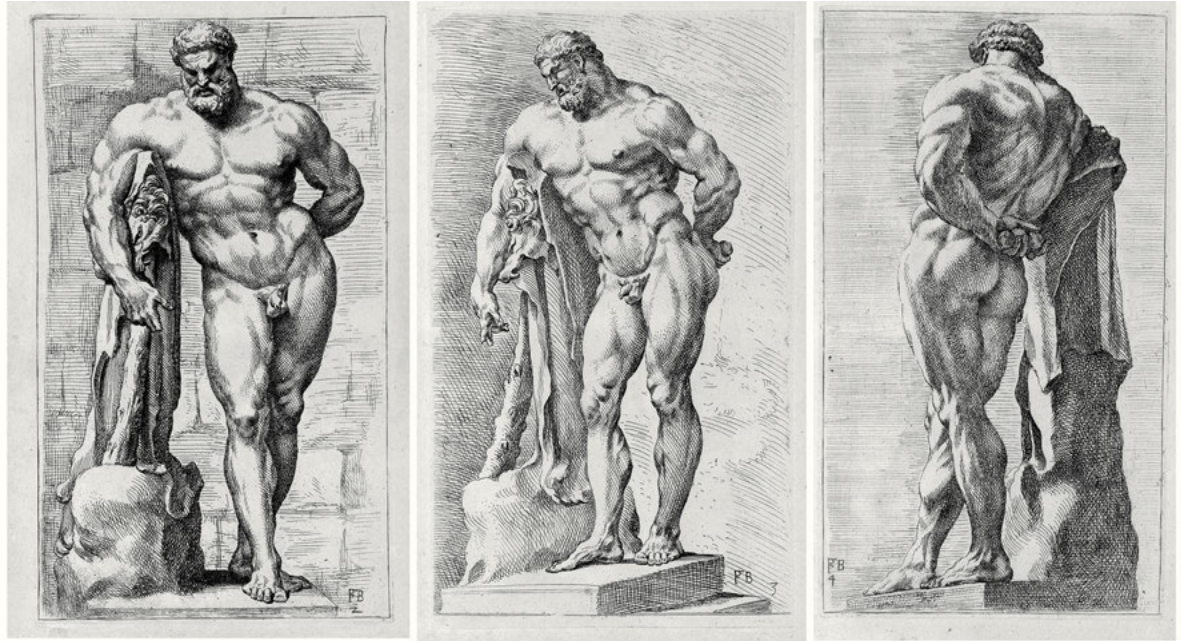
By the 1770s, encounters with sculpture and judgments of taste in the context of the grand tour

involved more than simply the recognition of ideal form, as the architectural transformations of the Cortile Belvedere suggest. As the design and apparent efficacy of the *gabinetti* attest, emphasis had shifted to stress aesthetic experience that entailed varying degrees of identification on the part of the viewer. As Martin Myrone observed, in Italy the "British or Irish gentleman would encounter the material fragments of the classical heritage to which he was supposedly heir, where he could discover the rapture of identification with his noble predecessors."<sup>78</sup> Batoni's picture, too, turns on an explicitly identificatory logic. Dundas is not merely shadowed by the Apollo Belvedere, but he himself takes on a somewhat more assertive and expansive version of the sculpture's recognizable pose.

By the time travelers such as Willoughby and Dundas had arrived in Rome, their itineraries and expectations would have already been shaped by their familiarity with celebrated antiquities.<sup>79</sup> Early travel narratives were published in the late seventeenth century and took off with a vengeance in the early eighteenth century with the publication of Richardson's 1722 *Account of Some of the Statues, Bas-Reliefs, Drawings and Painting in Italy*. This guide attested that the grand tourist would experience "pleasure and improvement from the sight of [the] fine objects," as Richardson prepared readers for their own firsthand encounters, having helpfully organized the account as a series of destinations.<sup>80</sup> Even by the early decades of the eighteenth century, such itineraries bore the traces of travelers' alertness to the wide array of reproductions circulating in myriad forms, from prints to plaster casts and cork models. Crucially, in addition to the physical movement and reinstallation of sculpture, the second half of the century saw an explosion of replicative practices. Plaster, marble, bronze, porcelain, and



FIGURE 16 François Perrier, three views of the Farnese Hercules. Engravings from Perrier, *Segmenta nobilium signorum e[t] statuarum, quae temporis dentem inuidium evasere urbis aeternae ruinis erepta*. . . . (Rome, 1638). University of Virginia Special Collections.



engraving after the antique allowed for the wide-ranging circulation of ancient forms.

An “imaginative geography” of antique sculpture would have been further solidified by print reproductions of noteworthy works.<sup>81</sup> While the works of Cornelis Cort, Jan Goessaert, and Marcantonio Raimondi provided early models, François Perrier’s *Segmenta nobilium signorum et statuarum* (Rome, 1638) set the standard for print reproduction after the antique. Perrier’s volume included one hundred engravings of celebrated sculptural works, the most eminent of which were depicted from multiple perspectives, as was the case with the Farnese Hercules (fig. 16). Focused nearly exclusively on ancient artifacts, aside from Michelangelo’s *Moses*, Perrier’s publication aimed to preserve the objects depicted from the ravages of time (an ambition attested by the allegorical frontispiece), while perhaps also providing models for artists.<sup>82</sup> While prints had served as the primary medium for the dissemination of information about the most famous sculptures from antiquity since the early

decades of the sixteenth century, Perrier’s innovative volume, dedicated to only the most “noble” exemplars, was embraced in the late seventeenth century, notably in publications of prints by Jan de Bisschop (1668–69, 1671), Joachim von Sandrart (1680), and Pietro Santi Bartoli (1693).<sup>83</sup>

Although Perrier’s rear view of the Farnese Hercules captured a vantage point not far removed from Hendrick Goltzius’s striking depiction almost fifty years prior, Perrier’s images generally privilege the frontal views that would come to dominate eighteenth- and nineteenth-century print reproductions, like the engraving of the Farnese Hercules that appeared in the French edition of Winckelmann’s *Histoire de l’art chez les anciens* of 1801 (see fig. 55). In numerous instances, Perrier depicted sculptures in outdoor settings, as he did with the Borghese Gladiator, framed in two of his four views by atmospheric rock outcroppings and foliage; the Arrotino, who appears sharpening his knife in a forest; or the Wrestlers, framed by the Colosseum (fig. 17). Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny note



FIGURE 17 François Perrier, Borghese Gladiator, Arrotino, and Wrestlers. Engravings from Perrier, *Segmenta nobilium signorum e[st] statuarum, quae temporis dentem invidium evasere Urbis aeternae ruinis erepta*. . . (Rome, 1638). University of Virginia Special Collections.

FIGURE 18 Carlo Gregory, after Campiglia, two views of the Dying Gladiator. Engravings from Bottari, *Del Museo Capitolino*, ed. Niccolò Foggini, vol. 3 (Rome, 1755), plates 67 and 68. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.

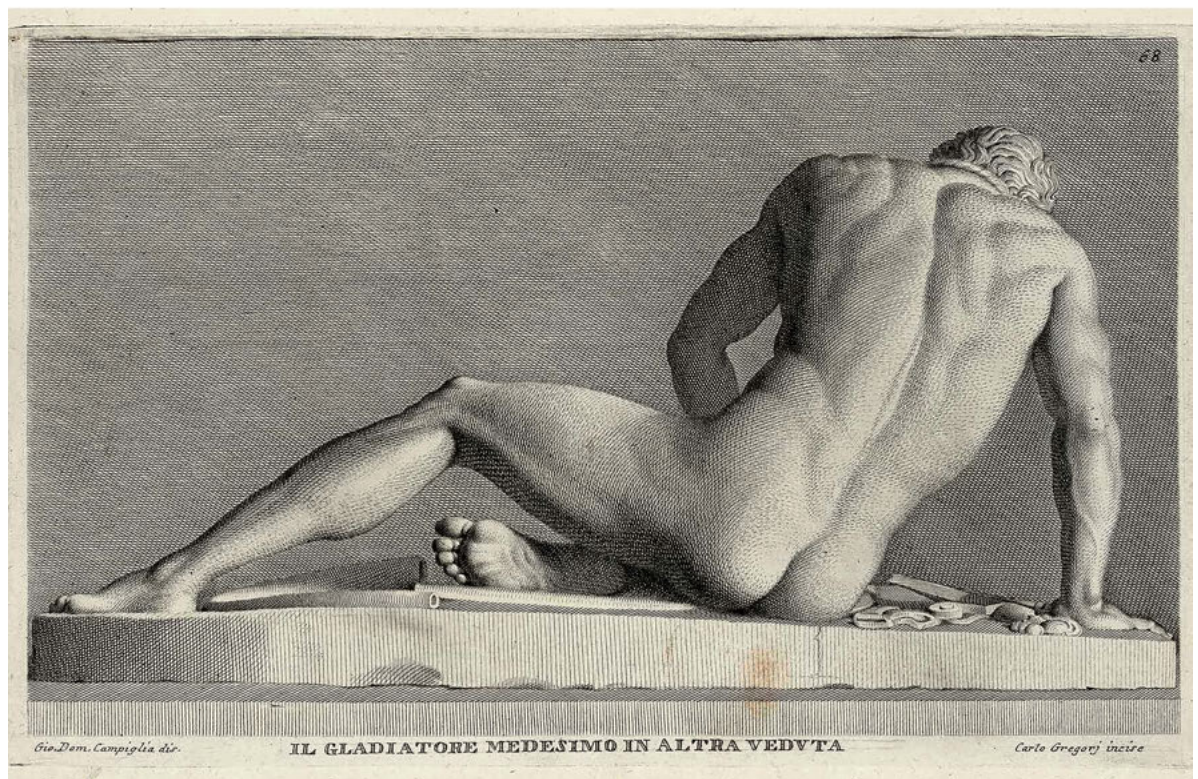
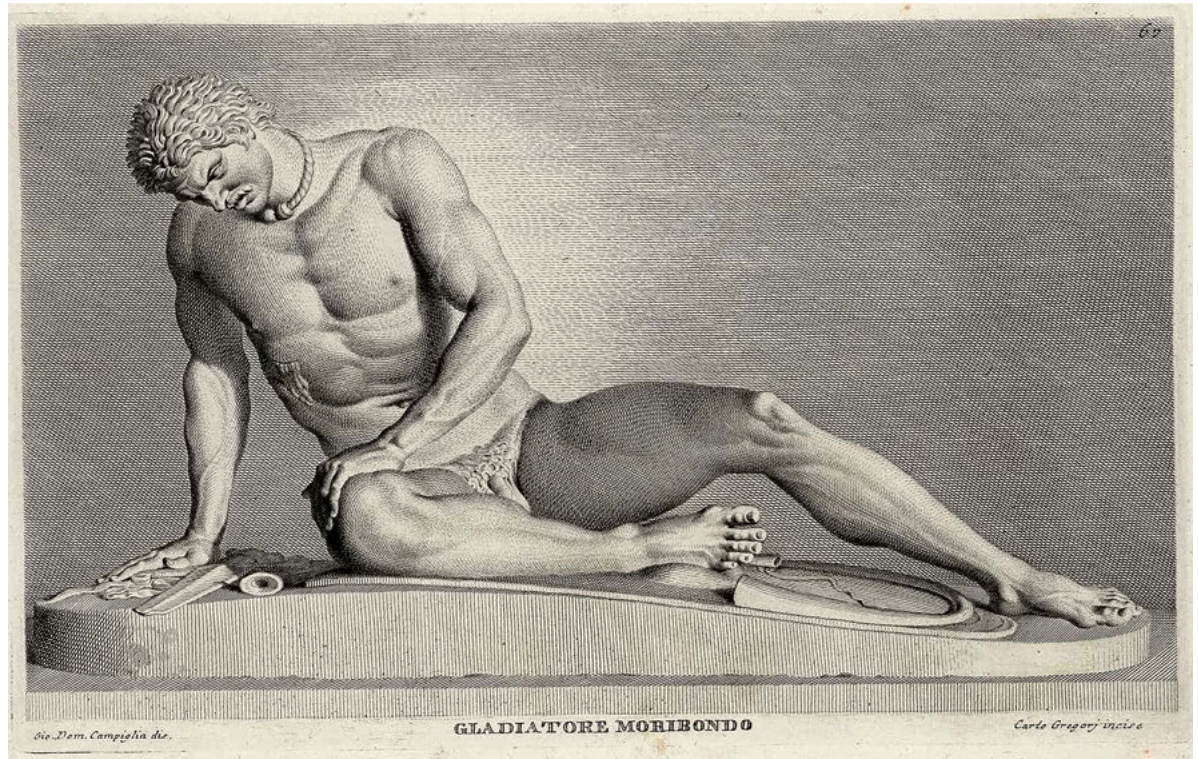
that Perrier's approach echoed earlier prints after the antique and drawings from Roman sketchbooks, which often included "fanciful architectural or landscape settings."<sup>84</sup> However, Perrier conjoins invented scenery with a scrupulous accuracy in the depiction of the sculptures' forms. Throughout his project, Perrier works to actively animate the sculptures in question: freed from their pedestals, they could be depicted as human subjects rather than static objects.

Following the opening of the Capitoline Museum, Perrier's example and reproductive engravings after the antique more generally were harnessed to new ends in museum catalogues. An early

exemplar of the genre, Bottari's *Del Museo Capitolino* (1741–82) paired catalogue entries and illustrations in a format that remains omnipresent in museum publications to this day.<sup>85</sup> The compendium reiterated the earlier practice of providing multiple views of particularly salient works, like the Dying Gladiator, which was depicted both frontally and from the rear in Bottari's publication, in a mode quite unlike the array of sculptures, including the Dying Gladiator, in the volume's frontispiece (fig. 18).

In addition to ambitious print volumes and museum catalogues that brought together visual and textual description, individual engravings likewise proliferated in the second half of the







eighteenth century. In some instances, it is possible to reconstruct how such engravings after the antique might have served artists. An engraving of the Apollo Belvedere by Volpato and Morghen, owned by Canova and now held in Bassano del Grappa, is particularly evocative in this regard (fig. 19). The sheet attests to Canova's use of the engraving as a working document on which he inscribed detailed measurements and notes for future reference, such as the annotation to the right of the figure's left (non-weight bearing) calf, which indicates that here "the flesh gravitates and is a little enlarged."<sup>86</sup> Thanks to this document, we can imagine Canova, armed with engraving, calipers, and pencil, examining and recording, measuring and reflecting upon—and indeed, presumably even touching—the Apollo Belvedere in the space of the Pio-Clementino.

While prints, together with copies in bronze and lead, among other materials, had been available to earlier collectors and connoisseurs, the eighteenth century was marked even more broadly by the efflorescence of a wide range of practices of reproduction and replication, particularly in three-dimensional mediums. As Malcolm Baker notes, reduced-scale bronzes after the antique proliferated, like those featured in Johann Zoffany's portrait *Sir Lawrence Dundas and His Grandson* from 1769–70 (fig. 20). Objects like the miniature Apollo Belvedere, Capitoline Antinous, and Borghese Gladiator on Dundas's mantel were widely available in Rome in the 1760s, thanks to four foundries (including, notably, that of Giacomo Zoffoli, the source of the seven statuettes depicted in Zoffany's canvas, a number of which are extant) specializing in the production of such small-scale replicas.<sup>87</sup> As it became more difficult to obtain original ancient sculptures and as export restrictions became

increasingly severe, the range of three-dimensional reproductions expanded. In addition to bronze reductions, in the mid-eighteenth century, lead sculptures appropriate for garden display became widely available. Replicas in plaster and porcelain also multiplied, like those produced by Volpato's porcelain factory, which opened in 1785 and whose biscuit-ware productions were distinguished by their scrupulous adherence to the originals' forms.<sup>88</sup>

Plaster casts were known to have been employed by artists as early as ancient Egypt, and casts after antique sculpture were regular features of royal and aristocratic collections in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Famously, in 1540 King Francis I charged Francesco Primaticcio with overseeing the production of plaster casts after the most celebrated antique and contemporary sculptures in Rome. However, in the eighteenth century, plaster casts came to occupy a privileged position in the domain of three-dimensional reproduction. The burgeoning demand for plaster casts after the antique encouraged their production and circulation well beyond princely collections, as they increasingly entered artists' studios, European academies (such as those in Stockholm and Copenhagen, which had cast collections from the time of their establishment), university collections (like the University of Göttingen, whose cast collection dates to the later 1760s), and museums. As Eckart Marchand and Rune Frederiksen have emphasized, collections of reproductive plaster casts were, "by and large, an invention of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries," a period that witnessed an explosion of both institutional and private collecting of plaster casts.<sup>89</sup> At the same time, the remarkable uptick in reproductive casts in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, together with the widespread circulation of prints

FIGURE 19 Giovanni Volpato and Raffaello Morghen, engraving after the Apollo Belvedere with notations by Antonio Canova, undated. Museo Civico, Bassano del Grappa. Photo: Museo Civico, Bassano del Grappa.









FIGURE 20 Johann Zoffany, *Sir Lawrence Dundas and His Grandson*, 1769–70. Oil on canvas. The Zetland Collection.

after the antique, continued practices begun in the Renaissance, only now powerfully accelerated to become crucial vectors of the diffusion of the “myth of a white antiquity” through their effective erasure of color.<sup>90</sup> If the existence of plaster casts after the antique allowed collectors and curators to form new combinations of sculpture in new venues, encounters with them likewise consolidated a sense that they were privileged objects, thus shaping expectations of scholars, tourists, and collectors alike.<sup>91</sup> These collections of plaster casts profoundly shaped academic and philosophical thinking about the antique and the paragone debates. For one, Herder’s published reflections on sculpture and painting were the result of the powerful impression

classical sculpture made on him in experiences gleaned almost entirely from casts in the collections at Versailles and Mannheim.<sup>92</sup>

Reproduction, in both two- and three-dimensional mediums, was a vital aspect of eighteenth-century encounters with the antique, one fundamental to the practices of discernment, perception, judgment, and consumption that so distinguished the period.<sup>93</sup> Reproduction also played a vital role in the development of a history of art, insofar as Winckelmann’s early polemical formulations about the worthy qualities of ancient art in his 1755 *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Mahlerey und Bildhauer-Kunst* (*Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture*)

depended, in this pre-Italian phase of his career, on his encounters with engravings and plaster casts. That prints remained vital to his work once in Italy is attested by Winckelmann's writing to Baron von Stosch in 1760, "I need many prints," and by a description of their presence on his desk and bed in the Villa Albani.<sup>94</sup> As von Maron's magisterial 1768 portrait corroborates, Winckelmann understood the importance of engravings both for the extended study of objects first encountered in the flesh and for the reader who might not have the benefit of this experience (see fig. 1). In von Maron's portrait, Winckelmann is depicted as if caught in the midst of work on his *Monumenti antichi inediti* (Unpublished antique monuments) of 1767, doubly referenced by the manuscript and by the engraved sheet depicting a pivotal work in Winckelmann's text: the Roman relief of Antinous, then in the Villa Albani.<sup>95</sup> The scrupulous object study that subtended Winckelmann's ambitious project—from the 1755 *Reflections* through to his *Monumenti antichi inediti*—depended upon access to sculptural collections and to reproductive technologies, including plaster casts and prints. And, as Winckelmann was all too aware, imitation often also entailed transformation.

### MUTABILITY

In a series of essays written at the end of the nineteenth century, Wölfflin observed that while photographing sculpture presented challenges, with careful consideration a sensitive viewer could discern a privileged single view that best encapsulated the work's form and meaning. Wölfflin's stated intention was to sharpen "awareness of the fact that an old figure should not be viewed from every which side, [but] rather has a particular view, and

that only a criminal carelessness denies it this artistically-willed view whenever an illustration is made."<sup>96</sup> Indeed, Wölfflin expressed considerable frustration with the fact that the single "comprehensive main view" seemed only too-often ignored in reproductions. His assertion suggests one explanation for why, in the eighteenth century, so many sculptures were depicted in roughly similar views when they could, at least in theory, have been captured from an infinite number of viewing perspectives. But for all of the freezing and stilling of sculpture into recognizable ur-views (whether or not they would later be deemed correct, following Wölfflin's criteria), in the mid-eighteenth century the sculptural antique was remarkably, and indeed quite literally, mutable. In the hands of artists like Perrier, antique forms, their settings, and even their distinguishing features could be the site of invention and radical modification. Inasmuch as the strategy of reproduction opens onto the question of mutability, so too does the avid unearthing of antiquities in this period. Active archaeological digs in the Roman Campagna continued to yield substantial discoveries. Objects excavated at Hadrian's Villa, Tivoli, and many other sites were shuttled out of the earth and into an active network of dealers, restorers, artists, and local and international collectors, even as they often underwent significant alterations along the way.

The famed Ganymede with an Eagle, imported to England from Italy in 1763, is a revealing case in point (fig. 21). Roman sculptor, restorer, and dealer Bartolomeo Cavaceppi was commissioned by Matthew Brettingham the Younger and Gavin Hamilton, the agents of the second Earl of Egremont, to make substantial renovations to the work that, notably, resulted in the addition of a head and right arm, together with the eagle's beak and

bottom portion of the left wing. Prior to the object's export to England to enter the Earl's collection at Petworth House, Cavaceppi patinated the sculpture's surface with chlorine and made an engraving of it to include in his *Raccolta d'antiche statue, busti, teste cognite ed altre sculture antiche*, published in Rome in 1786.<sup>97</sup>

Cavaceppi was fully integrated into the international social and commercial networks of excavating, selling, and collecting antiquities, and his work vividly demonstrates the degree to which their finding and making was interwoven, particularly in the decades around midcentury.<sup>98</sup> As Collins observes, "the explosion of excavations meant more work for the restorers" who were attached to papal collections. Beginning in 1770 and over the following decade, the Vatican ran two restoration studios where specialist sculptors labored "six or more days a week to transform mutilated fragments into completed works of art."<sup>99</sup> Account records further illuminate the remarkable continuity that existed between restoration and creation in this context. In the early 1760s, artist Barry effused about the "great numbers of ancient statues" available in Rome, which, when "entire," may vividly express "some opinion of the ancients." However, "there are legs, and thighs, and feet, and heads, brought out of old houses, and gardens, and other places, most of which have lain unheeded ever since the fifteenth century." In response to the influx of the English, these bits and pieces have increasingly been reconstructed by antiquarians and dealers with appalling results: "Fragments of all the gods are jumbled together, legs and heads of the fairies and graces, till . . . a monster is produced neither human or brutal."<sup>100</sup>

As the existence of the Vatican workshops attest, celebrated antiquities in public collections likewise bore the traces of substantial modification. In a

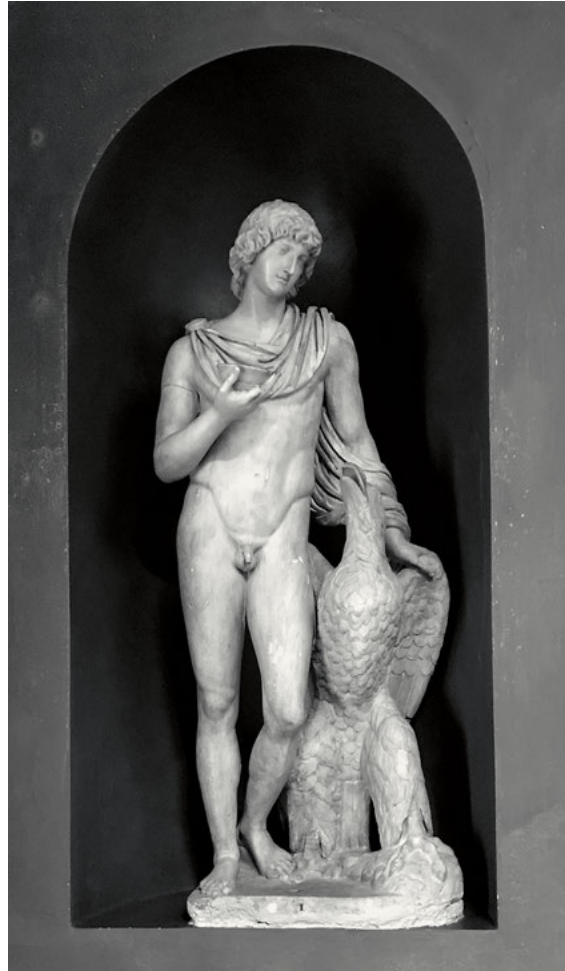
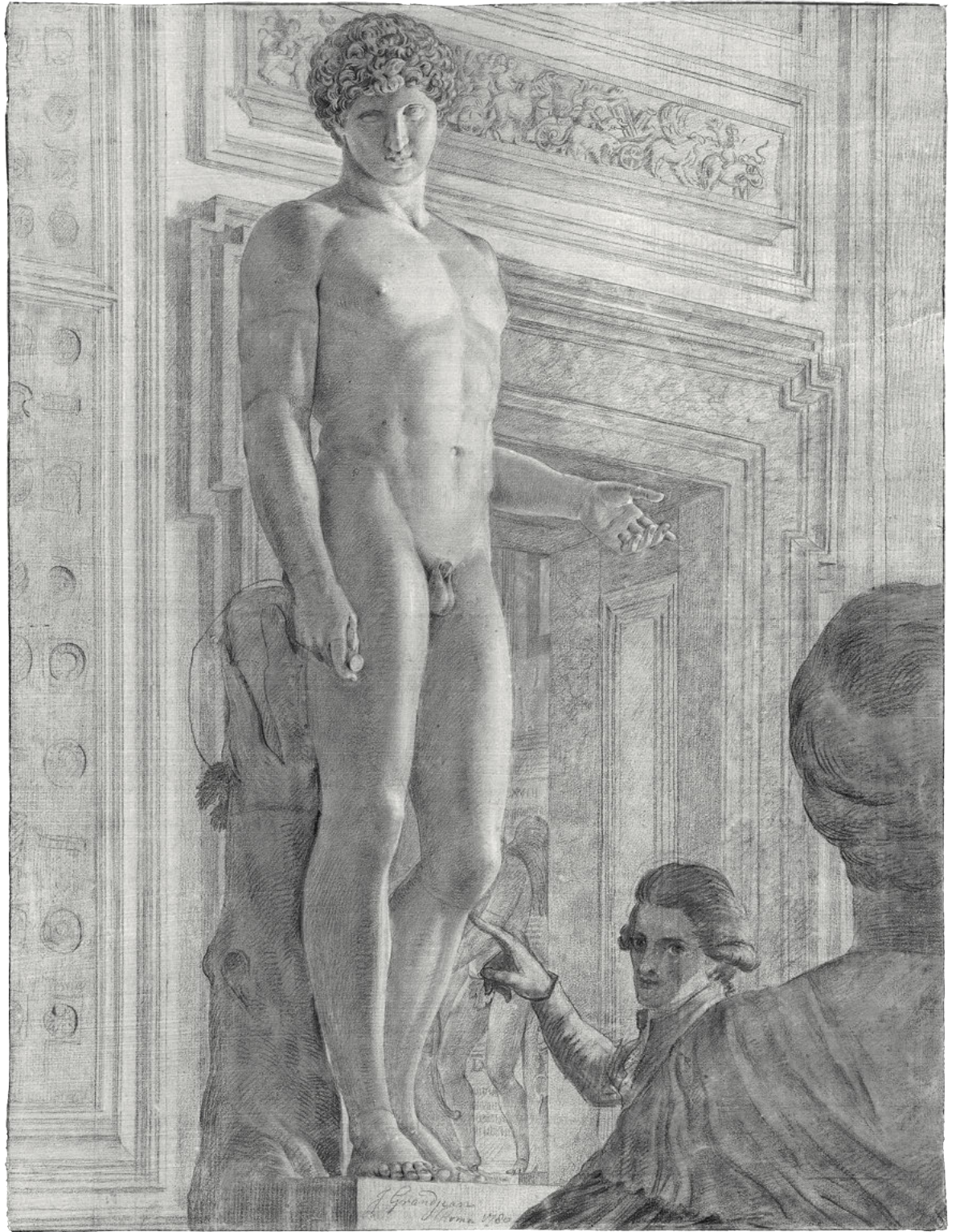


FIGURE 21 Ganymede with an Eagle, Roman, second century CE. Pentelic marble. Petworth House, National Trust. Photo © National Trust / Andrew Fetherston.

FIGURE 22 Jean Grandjean, *M. Hviid Pointing to the Restoration of the Albani Antinous in the Capitoline Museum*, 1780. Black chalk on grey prepared paper, heightened with white chalk. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

striking drawing of 1780, Grandjean depicted fellow Dutchman Hviid with the Capitoline Antinous (fig. 22). Reportedly discovered at Hadrian's Villa, the statue was part of the substantial collection of antiquities selected by Albani and purchased by Clement XII in 1733 for the new Capitoline Museum. Before it was exhibited, however, the figure was significantly restored by sculptor Pietro Bracci, whose records document the addition of the left arm, two fingers of the right hand, the left hand, the left leg, and the right foot, together with a new tree trunk and plinth.<sup>101</sup> Grandjean insists upon this history of modification in his drawing, which depicts Hviid with finger resting on the joint below the figure's left





knee that marked a boundary of a key area of restoration. The intensity with which Hviid locks the viewer into a circuitry of informed looking creates an encounter framed by the desire to identify sculptural origins and additions in order to reveal how—and where—solid marble bodies had been (recently) made over, anew. In a picture in which the contradictory impulses to accuracy and invention are merged, Grandjean's picturing of Hviid's deeply shadowed, emphatically pointing hand ensures that we be alert, as eighteenth-century viewers were, to the mutability of sculpture's form.<sup>102</sup>

Another of the famed sculptures in the Capitoline, the Cupid and Psyche group, arrived as part of the Albani collection purchase, having been discovered on the Aventine Hill in 1749 (fig. 23). Given that year to the Capitoline Museum by Pope Benedict XIV, the group was celebrated in engravings and travel accounts for its depiction of innocent heterosexual desire. Reproductions appeared in gems, as an intaglio, and in biscuit porcelain by Sèvres, as well as in larger-scale plaster.<sup>103</sup> A closely related sculpture of Cupid and Psyche had been discovered earlier in the century, evidently by collector and excavator Count Giuseppe Fede, on his property adjacent to Hadrian's Villa. This work, captured in a spectacular red-chalk drawing by Batoni around 1730, is virtually identical to the Capitoline version, aside from a noteworthy exception: a twist of the neck and a turn of the raised wrist transform Cupid's gesture into one of apparent revulsion (fig. 24). Highlighting the striking results of these modifications, which Haskell and Penny attribute to the work of restoration, Batoni's drawing of the now-lost group telegraphs the startling mutability of antique form as it was shuttled through eighteenth-century networks and mediums.<sup>104</sup> Even as the encounter takes on a new



degree of animation and urgency thanks to the confrontation between Psyche's desire and Cupid's violent antipathy, Batoni has further amplified the distinction between the depicted marble sculpture group and his drawing by exploiting the capacity for chalk to evoke the softness and malleability of skin. Two forms of mutability are thus simultaneously in

FIGURE 23 Cupid and Psyche, first or second century CE, Roman copy after a Hellenistic original (second century BCE). Marble. Musei Capitolini, Rome. Photo: Universal Images Group / Art Resource, New York.



FIGURE 24 Pompeo Batoni, *Cupid and Psyche*, ca. 1730. Red chalk on paper. Reproduced by permission of the Provost and Fellows of Eton College.

play, the first of which is the structural modification of antique sculpture. Just as crucially, artists' work after the antique in two-dimensional mediums likewise opened productive avenues for exploring and exploiting morphological variation. As Batoni's drawing suggests, depictions of ostensibly immutable marble forms could lend themselves to

projecting and probing alternative scenarios of human desire, a dynamic often at the foreground of encounters with the antique.

### TRANSFORMATIVE ENCOUNTER

The eighteenth century witnessed a new emphasis on the experience of beholders of art, as was evident in the exploration of representations of the Pygmalion narrative. In this sense, sculpture was deeply enmeshed in these broader developments. As Marshall observes, "Unprecedented demands were placed on the experience of art" in an era when "the criteria for judging works of art shifted from conformity to classical rules to the power of art to shape the subjective experience of readers and beholders."<sup>105</sup> Descriptions of such encounters live on in the myriad letters and memoirs penned by grand tourists. These writings repeatedly capture travelers' impressions of antique sculpture, their descriptions certifying their acute powers of observation, their sensitivity to beauty, and thus their unimpeachable taste.

In one notable early example, Richardson reports that he spent "ten Hours in [a] Gallery [in the Uffizi] considering the Beauty of the Statues there." Above all, Richardson was taken with the *Venus de' Medici*. While he expressed reservations about the sculpture's proportion, noting that "the Head is something too little for the Body," he was filled with admiration for its lifelikeness: "It has too such a Fleshy Softness, one would think it would yield to the Touch. It has such a Beauty, and Delicacy; such a Lightness." Whereas Richardson arrived at the Uffizi with "some Prejudice against [the Venus]," thanks to his study of casts of the sculpture, the encounter with the real yielded new admiration, much of which turned on the capacity for





the marble, of “a Beautiful Colour,” to evoke the transparency of flesh.<sup>106</sup>

More than one hundred years later, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *Marble Faun* (1860) begins with a scene of sculptural encounter; in the Capitoline, the protagonists are surrounded by celebrated ancient sculptures, among them the Dying Gladiator, the Antinous, and the “Faun of Praxiteles” of the novel’s title. Like Richardson, Hawthorne evidently found the trope of marble-becoming-flesh generative. The novel’s characters are introduced during a curious episode of sculptural animation and transformation. Despite being “wrought in that severe material of marble,” the Faun captivates a trio of artists who see in its form the perfect portrait of their friend, the young Italian Donatello.<sup>107</sup> Captivated by the play between the “magic peculiarity” of the Pentelic marble and the reanimation of the sculpture by Donatello, who gamely apes the sculpture’s pose and character, an oil painter named Miriam is the first to recognize the resemblance (10). At the end of a series of passages displaying Hawthorne’s extraordinary ekphrastic skill (and, by implication, Miriam’s attunement to form), Miriam is seized by powerful emotion, thanks to her encounter with the Faun, its promise of animation, and with it, the fleeting sense of connection to an earlier, prelapsarian state. So struck is she by these reflections that her companion, the sculptor Kenyon, is startled to discover that Miriam has been moved to tears.

A century earlier Goethe noted a similarly intense response, when in 1769 he reported having been “in ecstasies” over a plaster of the Laocoön group “recently cast after the original in Rome,” which he (like Herder) encountered in Mannheim. Years later in Rome, his enthusiasm was heightened when he was confronted by many of the same sculptures in marble. As in the case of Richardson, the

materiality of marble played an essential role in Goethe’s encounter with the Apollo Belvedere. But even as he lamented that “the plaster always looks chalky and dead in comparison [to marble],” Goethe immediately offered a countervailing image of the generative aspect of plaster casting: “And yet what a joy it is to enter a cast maker’s workshop, where one sees the magnificent limbs of the statues issue individually from the molds and so obtains entirely new views of the figures.”<sup>108</sup> In Goethe’s reflections on marble and plaster forms, from plaster’s disappointing deadening of marble’s flesh-like qualities to the generative processes of plaster casting, animation and mortification are recurrent motifs.

Herder’s account of his visit to Rome in 1788 and 1789 provides another instance when the sensitive scrutiny of sculpture has transformative effects. In a letter to his son, he describes a torchlit visit to the Belvedere in 1788. Commencing with “the great, beautiful Hercules,” Herder notes that while the sculpture is fragmentary, “his muscles, his wide chest, his beautiful back, his brave legs are alive.” The tour’s final stages included observation of “the beautiful Antinous . . . the beautiful Apollo, [and] the tolerant, exhaling Laocoon,” before returning “again to the beautiful Apollo, where we closed our great divine apparition.” What was at stake for Herder is distilled in crystalline form in the final sentiments in the letter, where he attests that he has “learned more philosophy from poets than from the philosophers” and that one must “see artworks . . . to become an excellent philosopher.”<sup>109</sup> Encounters with works of art, which Herder explicitly defines as classical sculpture, are at once foundational and philosophically transformational.

While Herder understood his firsthand examination of classical sculpture to be critical for his intellectual formation, many other travelers basked in

the sheer delight of the encounter. Charles Dupaty's *Lettres sur l'Italie* (1788) stands as a classic in this genre, with Dupaty effusing about the Apollino: "What beautiful features! This line that forms the complete design, how justly drawn! how it glides! how it parts and returns! How invisibly it connects the limbs one with another!"<sup>110</sup> But lurking just beyond the oft-rehearsed admiration of works like the Apollo Belvedere was the specter of aesthetic encounters gone awry. One such story was reported by English tourist Charlotte Eaton, who explained that while she had "gone mad about the Apollo [Belvedere]," she was not the first: "A far more unfortunate damsel, a native of France . . . at the sight of this matchless statue, lost at once her heart and her reason. Day after day, and hour after hour, the fair enthusiast gazed and wept, and sighed her soul away, till she became, like the marble, pale, but not like the marble, cold . . . death at last closed the ill-fated passion, and the life of 'the maid of France.'" Luckily, Eaton hastened to add, "English maids don't die of love—neither for men nor statues—therefore I hope to live to admire the Apollo."<sup>111</sup> In her consideration of the pleasures and perils of the grand tour, viewed through these and other documents, Chloe Chard notes, "The expression of pleasure in an ancient statue establishes that the traveler is speaking as a full participant in the grand tour, able to appropriate this topography for his or her own enjoyment, and this power of approbation is proclaimed all the more strongly by the lack of any need to express reservations about the delight which the sculpture arouses."<sup>112</sup> Such writing, then, testifies to how expectations for a certain kind of firsthand experience of sculpture had become pervasive, not merely in the realm of tourism.

This is familiar art-historical terrain. Well-established accounts of the allure of the antique for

modern artists and art viewers are firmly rooted in the eighteenth century and, indeed, in art history's own history. Beginning with *Reflections on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture* (1755) and more fully elaborated in *The History of the Art of Antiquity* (1764), Winckelmann established the modern parameters of a history of art. And, no less crucially, he posited ancient sculpture as the pulsing heart animating art historians' and artists' enthusiasms.

We may deduce something of the role Winckelmann mapped out for sculpture in what is perhaps the most reproduced passage from *The History of the Art of Antiquity*, which takes as its subject the Apollo Belvedere: "In gazing upon this masterpiece of art, I forget all else, and I myself adopt an elevated stance, in order to be worthy of gazing upon it. My chest seems to expand with veneration and to heave like those I have seen swollen as if by the spirit of prophecy, and I feel myself transported to Delos and to the Lycian groves, places Apollo honored with his presence—for my figure seems to take on life and movement, like Pygmalion's beauty."<sup>113</sup> Here, Winckelmann at once celebrates the morphological ideality of the Apollo Belvedere and insists on the sculpture's transformative effects on its rapt spectator. Notably, it is the beholder, rather than the statue, who is animated in this fundamental reordering of the Pygmalion myth. The logic of this passage is best understood in relation to Winckelmann's intersubjective theory of imitation, according to which copying antique sculptures involved much more than the arid repetition of ideal form. In Winckelmann's formulation, the encounter with the antique turned on the (contemporary) artist's identification with—and, by extension, transformation by—an ancient emulative circuitry that lay behind the sculpture as a sort of primal scene, itself motored by the intersubjective

relationship between artist and beautiful model; these origins lived on in the sculptural artifact and thereby held out a sort of access to this lost utopian past. Registering this fundamentally transformative logic of Winckelmann's project, Goethe proved himself an astute reader when he famously remarked of Winckelmann, "We learn nothing by reading him, but we *become* something."<sup>114</sup>

As the Apollo Belvedere passage suggests, Winckelmann's project cannot be solely understood through the lens of antiquarian and archaeological preoccupations, for it bears the traces of eighteenth-century sensualist and empiricist philosophers writing after Locke. For many of these authors—among them Voltaire, Diderot, and Condillac—sculpture functioned as a veritable planet around which a series of theoretical proposals orbited. Lichtenstein trenchantly observes that all of this philosophizing on sculpture had dubious effects on sculpture itself—that is, in the realm of the creation and reception of sculpture in the period.<sup>115</sup> However, she and others rightly emphasize something vital: talking about sculpture was by the 1760s well established as a means for exploring the fundamental operations of the human senses.<sup>116</sup>

Positioning himself in the sensualist and empiricist tradition, Herder, a student of Kant and admirer of Winckelmann, added his voice in 1778 to this esteemed philosophical lineage. In *Plastik*, Herder brought together current philosophical analyses of the senses with an evaluation of the distinctive experiences that were the product of encounters with painting and sculpture. Working in this volume to dislodge what he considered vision's (and therefore painting's) effective colonization of the aesthetic experience, Herder aimed to restore touch—and sculpture with it—to its rightfully primary place. For Herder, the heart of the matter was that sculpture,

quite unlike two-dimensional mediums like painting, called on *Gefühl*, or "corporeal feeling," to draw the spectator into an utterly different three-dimensional interaction.<sup>117</sup> Herder argued that with sculpture, the viewer is interpellated in a spatial and social interaction in which she becomes aware of the reciprocal nature of her contact with the sculptural body (for Herder, sculpture is *de facto* figurative). He explained that "because [sculpture] presents a *human being*, a fully *animated body*, it speaks to us as an *act*; it seizes hold of us and penetrates our very being, awakening the full range of responsive human feeling."<sup>118</sup>

Sculpture's special appeal to the body had important implications for viewing experience. If paintings could be grasped immediately through eyesight alone, which Herder saw as their shortcoming, sculpture required more: "The living, embodied truth of the three-dimensional space of angles, of form and volume, is not something we can learn through sight."<sup>119</sup> However, sculpture's physicality, as well as the prolonged physical examination it required, was far from straightforward. Indeed, the passage in which Herder most carefully considered the mechanics of sculptural encounter reads as an ode to gratification deferred where the question of eventual knowledge is altogether more tenuous than might be expected:

Consider the lover of art sunk deep in contemplation who circles restlessly around a sculpture. What would he not do to transform his sight into touch, to make his seeing into a form of touching that feels in the dark? He moves from one spot to another, seeking rest but finding none. He cannot locate a single viewpoint from which to view the work, such as a painting provides, for a thousand points of view are not sufficient. As soon as a single rooted viewpoint takes precedence, the living work becomes a mere canvas and the beautiful rounded form is dismembered into a piti-



ful *polygon*. For this reason, he shifts from place to place: his eye becomes his hand and the ray of light his finger, or rather, his soul has a finger that is yet finer than his hand or the ray of light. With his soul he seeks to *grasp* the image that arose from the arm and the soul of the artist. Now he has it! The illusion has worked; the sculpture lives and his soul *feels* that it lives. His soul speaks to it, not as if his soul sees, but as if it touches, as if it feels.<sup>120</sup>

In the flight from “mere canvas,” the spectator’s restless movement around the periphery of the sculptural body threatens to yield no information at all, to fall away into a series of sequential views that add up to nothing. And yet, once the threat of dismemberment is overcome, the sculpture provides an aesthetic experience whose movement is something like that of the sublime. The Kantian sublime is triggered by a “formless object,” which resists or defies cognition and thus overwhelms the subject with an immersive excess that short-circuits reason and is consequently experienced as the threat of annihilation.<sup>121</sup> But, of course, the movement of the sublime in Kantian aesthetics is destined for the apotheosis of thought insofar as the formless or fragmented impression *is* ultimately rendered as subject to comprehension (*Zusammenfassung*), to “getting it.”<sup>122</sup> Kant’s formulation at once imposes a distance from the world of objects and firmly subjects the senses to reason since the experience of the sublime culminates, as it does, with the subject’s awareness of their supersensible faculty. Nevertheless, the movement of the sublime offers a productive comparison with Herder’s formulation, in which the sculptural body ultimately allows the viewer to recognize a formal homology with their own consciousness. Once we “have it,” the sculpture is a three-dimensional manifestation of the inner life of the mind.

As Winckelmann’s and Herder’s writings on encounters with classical sculpture attest, the eighteenth century saw a consolidation of ideas about sculpture in which new emphasis was placed on the question of the viewer’s experience. In what Potts terms the “modern sculptural imaginary,” considerable interest was directed to an embodied, affective encounter, with the result that “a shift occurs, . . . whereby the structuring of a work is partly defined through the viewer’s encounter with it, and can no longer be located entirely in its form.”<sup>123</sup> Of course, there are important implications to such a sea change, discernable not only in travel accounts but also in sculptural encounter as it was captured in representational practices. Indeed, we are now poised to return to familiar grand-tour portraits, such as those of Dundas and Willoughby, with a somewhat different attunement to what was at stake in the experience and depiction of sculptural encounter. Such pictures captured sitters who were participants in the grand tour, in an age of the art museum, and in the decades after midcentury, in a cultural milieu informed by newly “extravagant” expectations for encounters with art. Paintings such as these at once certified their sitters’ or commissioners’ cultural refinement, even as artists and tourists of Blanchet and Batoni’s time operated in an era shaped by a burgeoning sense that seeing objects such as the Apollo Belvedere, the Laocoön, and the Farnese Hercules could be transformative.

### BLANCHET’S GHOSTS

In 1765, Blanchet, a French artist who had been based in Rome since 1728, completed a remarkable series of paintings after the antique. This group of eight canvases depicted six of the most famous ancient figural sculptures of Blanchet’s day: the



FIGURE 25 Louis-Gabriel Blanchet, *The Apollo Belvedere Among Dead Trees*, 1765. Oil on canvas. Saltram House, National Trust. Photo © National Trust Images / John Hammond.

FIGURE 26 Louis-Gabriel Blanchet, *The Venus de' Medici Among Dead Trees*, 1765. Oil on canvas. Saltram House, National Trust. Photo © National Trust Images.





Apollo Belvedere (fig. 25), the Venus de' Medici (fig. 26), the Dying Gladiator, the Borghese Warrior, the Farnese Hercules, and the Sleeping Hermaphrodite (see fig. 3), together with two smaller canvases depicting simulated reliefs of the three Graces and a medallion portrait of a Roman youth.<sup>124</sup> The pictures were most likely purchased in 1764 by Robert

Parker the Younger (later Lord Boringdon), who was then in Rome during an abbreviated grand tour. Having tragically lost his new wife, who died in Naples after only a few months of marriage, Parker traveled on to Rome, where he commissioned Angelica Kaufmann to paint a portrait of himself, which today hangs with the Blanchet pictures in the family estate, Saltram House.<sup>125</sup>

Inasmuch as he has been considered, Blanchet is largely known for his portraits of the Stuart Court in exile; for his grand-tour portraits, as in the case of his portrait of Willoughby (see fig. 14); and for his elegantly drawn *vedute* of the Roman countryside.<sup>126</sup> The series of paintings after ancient sculpture occupy a singular position within Blanchet's oeuvre, even in relation to the allegorical paintings he created for interiors. As grisaille depictions after the antique, the series resonates with what was, by the mid-1760s, a recognizable feature of interiors designed by Robert Adam, who would be employed by the Parkers to improve Saltram House beginning in 1768. Kedleston Park, Croome Court, and Osterley Park House, among others of Adam's projects, featured grisaille trompe l'oeil paintings of bas-relief sculptures.<sup>127</sup> A *Ceremonial Scene* designed by Adam for the Long Gallery at Croome Court is an excellent example (fig. 27). Executed in a similarly restrained palette, with its sights explicitly trained on antique sculpture, the *Ceremonial Scene* enjoys some common ground with Blanchet's pictures. However, Blanchet's paintings predate any record of Adam's work at Saltram.<sup>128</sup> More significantly, the pictures depart from Adam's work in grisaille insofar as the paintings depict individual figures rather than figural groups. Indeed, in their single-figure format and in the scale of their depiction, Blanchet's paintings are perhaps best understood as an unusual modification of a genre



familiar to Blanchet: grand-tour portraiture, only, in this case, portraiture of sculpture.

Blanchet's remarkable suite of paintings invokes familiar antique forms even as they are here reconceived on the level of form and narrative. The depicted artifacts are yoked to new ends in their capacity to probe the limits of painting and sculpture while simultaneously framing viewers' experiences of sculptural objects rendered in paint. While we may never know with certainty where the pictures originally hung at Saltram, they were surely conceived as a group.<sup>129</sup> Within the group, three sets of pairs emerge: the *Apollo Belvedere* and *Venus*

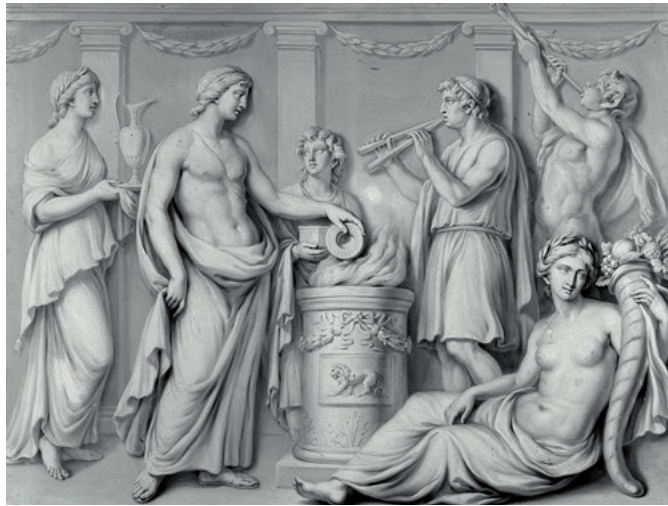


FIGURE 27 Adam Partnership (Robert Adam, designer), *Ceremonial Scene from the Long Gallery at Croome Court*, High Green, Severn Stoke, England, 1765–66. Oil on canvas. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Fletcher Fund, 1960. Photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art, [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org).



FIGURE 28 Louis-Gabriel Blanchet, *The Dying Gladiator*, 1765. Oil on canvas. Saltram House, Devon, National Trust. Photo © National Trust Images.



FIGURE 29 Louis-Gabriel Blanchet, *The Borghese Warrior*, 1765. Oil on canvas. Saltram House, Devon, National Trust. Photo © National Trust Images.



FIGURE 30 Louis-Gabriel Blanchet, *The Farnese Hercules*, 1765. Oil on canvas. Saltram House, Devon, National Trust. Photo © National Trust Images.

*de' Medici* (see figs. 25 and 26); the *Dying Gladiator* and *Sleeping Hermaphrodite* (see figs. 28 and 3); and the *Borghese Warrior* and the *Farnese Hercules* (figs. 29 and 30).<sup>130</sup> These pairs are discernable thanks to the pictures' formats and subjects; the horizontally oriented canvases of the *Gladiator* and *Hermaphrodite* suggest a reciprocity of compromised bodies, bodies that contain a revelation at their core. By contrast, the *Apollo* and *Venus* pairing bespeaks canonically ideal forms, masculine and feminine. This leaves, as a final couple, the vertically oriented, niche-bound strong men.

The imperative to see these pictures in terms of pairings is nowhere clearer than in the case of the *Apollo* and *Venus* duo, where branches of dying vegetation in the paintings' backgrounds extend like arms to establish a compositional mirroring between the two canvases while simultaneously securing the paintings' lateral relations—*Apollo* is designed to stand to *Venus*'s left. The remarkably similar settings in which the two figures are depicted marks a striking departure from the vast corpus of extant images after these famed antique sculptures. Perrier's engravings of the *Apollo* and *Venus* from 1638



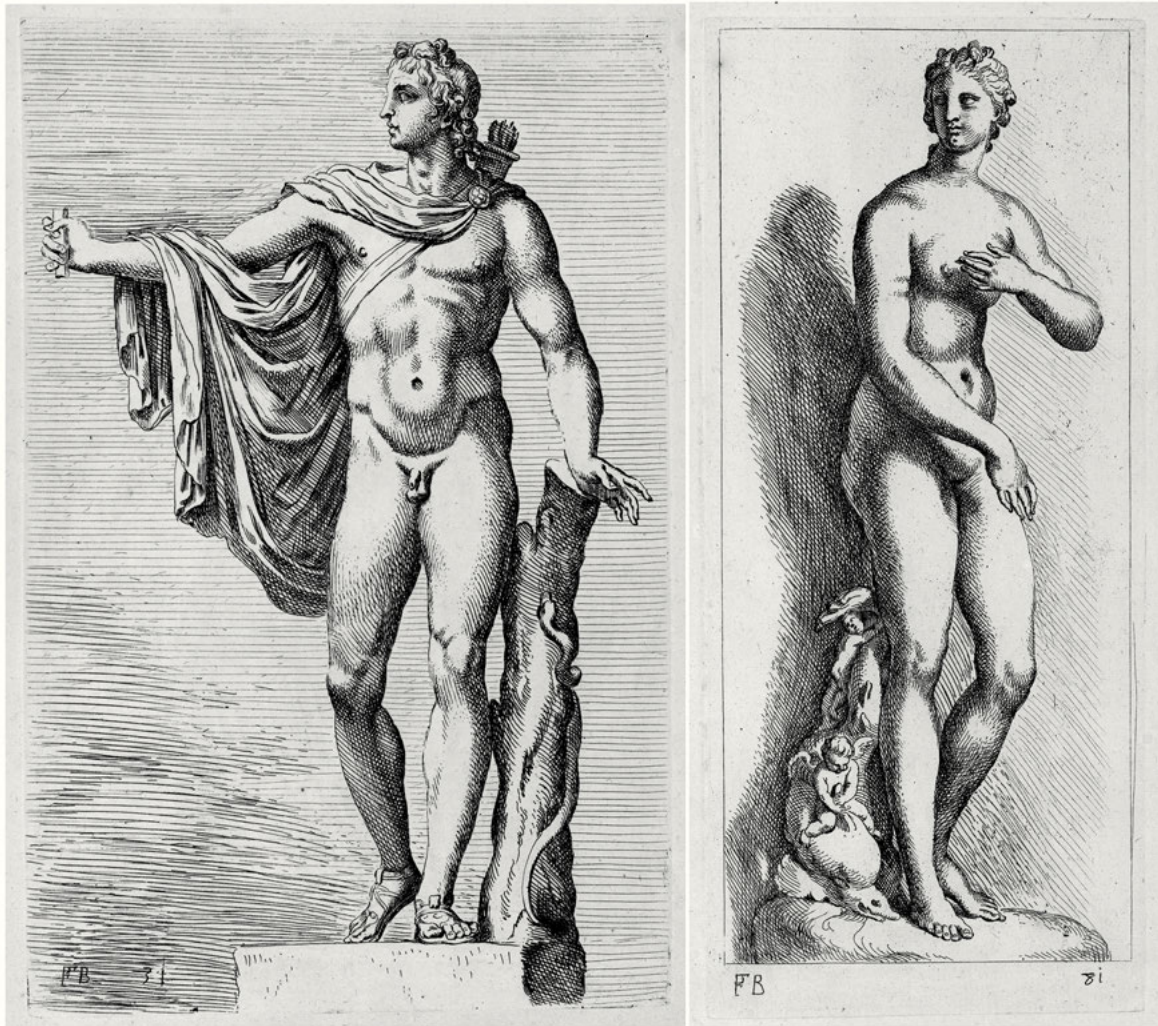


FIGURE 31 François Perrier, Apollo Belvedere and Venus de' Medici. Engravings from Perrier, *Segmenta nobilium signorum e[st] statuarum, quætemporis dentem inuidium evasere Urbis æternæ ruinis erepta...* (Rome, 1638). University of Virginia Special Collections.

epitomize the familiar neutral backdrops that tended to be the rule for such images by the mid-eighteenth century (fig. 31). It is likely that Blanchet's completed paintings were developed with recourse to similar drawings and prints after the antique, only in this case measured and marked up to ensure accurate translation, as in the case of Canova's annotated print of the Apollo Belvedere (see fig. 19).<sup>131</sup> In the course of his work from sculpture to drawing to paint, Blanchet exchanged Perrier's non-spaces for a gloomy, vegetal atmosphere in which verdant boughs are overshadowed by large dead limbs that bisect the

composition, their withered extensions curling into the foreground in an unsettling embrace around the sculptures' plinths (while difficult to see in reproduction, Blanchet's *Venus*, like the *Apollo*, features an arboreal extension creeping into the right foreground). The decision to include dead trees among the living had an echo in contemporary garden design; Horace Walpole famously decried landscape designer William Kent's decision to plant dead trees in Kensington Gardens "to give a greater air of truth to the scene."<sup>132</sup> In Blanchet's hands, the trees are an essential ingredient for crafting what Alastair Laing



aply describes as “setting[s] evocative of transience and decay.”<sup>133</sup> Indeed, the sense of forbidding—if not foreboding—that these trees instill, thanks to their proximity to the sightless statue-sitters, may well have played a role in the fact that the paintings appear to have been known within the Parker, Earls of Morley, family as “the Ghosts.”<sup>134</sup>

Mutability may here be understood in relation to the pairings, which result in the unfurling of more and less explicit discursive circuits as well as in the particular inflections, sensations, and sentiments produced by depicting sculptures in these specific settings. At the same time, Blanchet’s series creates a relationship between the painted sculptures and their three-dimensional referents that hinges, in another valence, on mutability. In Blanchet’s handling of color and space, the series registers a pronounced interest in the operations of moving form through materials and in the related negotiation of sculptural viewing across two and three dimensions.

Far from the famed pure whiteness of Carrara marble, the sculptural surfaces depicted in these paintings tend toward grey and green hues. And thus, the proximity of Apollo’s legs and the dead branch at his feet suggest less an encounter between enduring and transient materials than they do an uncanny continuity of form and tone. Is the sculpture marble, or is it rather more vegetal matter subject to the natural laws of decomposition? In his deployment of grisaille and in crafting such distinctly muddy figures, Blanchet situates the depicted sculptures at a remove from the white marble of their sources, which thereby makes them appear less frozen and more organic. Indeed, across the series, Blanchet conjures the specter of sculptural animation. This effect is perhaps most pronounced in the depictions of Apollo and Venus, thanks to the figures’ coloration and enframement

by the landscape. Indeed, a similar observation might be made about the Dying Gladiator and Hermaphrodite, both of which are presented compositionally as protagonists. In this sense, Blanchet’s exploration of painting’s ability to animate and narrativize is a remarkable parry into ongoing paragone debates.<sup>135</sup> To turn the usual comparative logic on its head, if the *Apollo Belvedere* might be usefully compared to Batoni’s portrait of Dundas, so too might we see in the *Dying Gladiator* the spirit of Batoni’s extraordinary reclining portrait of Humphry Morice from 1761–62 (fig. 32). In Blanchet’s hands, the sculptures appear in the guise of sitters, with all the centrality and directness of address that such conditions imply; while the sculptures do not meet the viewer’s gaze, their depiction according to familiar ur-views emphasizes their particularity, identifiability, and fame as discrete objects.

At the same time, the curious mutability of Blanchet’s interrogation of antique form is quite unlike the earlier instances of Perrier’s plinth-banishing animations. Indeed, Blanchet’s pictures emphatically insist that they depict *sculptures* in paint. Inasmuch as Blanchet’s pictures function according to a logic of discrete pairs, they are nevertheless bound together by the artist’s overriding interest in sculptural and spatial enframement. Each sculpture stands—or reclines—on a base that is clearly demarcated as such. Blanchet has taken care to render these bases as appropriate to their subjects: from the roughly circular supports buoying the Apollo and Venus to the rectangular bases for the Warrior and Hercules, as well as the generous elliptical ground supporting the Gladiator and Bernini’s extraordinary mattress for the Hermaphrodite. In some instances, we observe a reduplication of framing devices, as in the case of the Borghese Warrior,



FIGURE 32 Pompeo Batoni, *Portrait of Humphry Morice*, 1761–62. Oil on canvas. Brinsley Ford Collection, London.

who stands on a double base situated on a stone slab, all of which is framed within a niche.

Out of this robust emphasis on enframement emerges a crucial unifying compositional and spatial thread: each of the sculptures' bases rests on a common grey stone slab or ledge, whose form, color, and perspectival depiction is roughly continuous throughout the series. This feature is not insignificant, especially when we recall the great likelihood that these pictures would have originally hung as a group in the same space, as they do today at Saltram. The possibility that Blanchet's pictures may well have been exhibited alongside three-dimensional reproductions of antique sculpture provides an added charge to the encounter they stage. While its collections are now largely dispersed, Saltram was home to a significant corpus of sculpture. One

rare extant object, a plaster reduction of the Farnese Hercules, provides a sense of the juxtapositions this setting would have made possible (fig. 33).<sup>136</sup>

Whether hung in a dining room or library, the series would have transformed the space it occupied into a quasi-sculpture gallery. The dramatic spatial recession staged in the six principal canvases, when organized around a room, would further expand the architectural space, transforming viewers into gallery visitors thanks to the pairing of painted statues with three-dimensional sculptures.<sup>137</sup> Originating in Blanchet's (and perhaps also Parker's) encounters in Rome with the paintings' sculptural referents and developed with recourse to Blanchet's drawings after the antique, ultimately, in Devon, the pictures' depiction and installation would have at once recalled the original

FIGURE 33 Unknown artist, plaster reduction of the Farnese Hercules. Saltram House, Devon, National Trust.



three-dimensional sculptures to which they referred, even as they moved significantly beyond them to stage altogether new encounters for viewers at Saltram.

### BARRY'S TORSO

Like Blanchet's Saltram paintings, Barry's *Self-Portrait with James Paine and Dominique Lefèvre (with the Belvedere Torso)* (ca. 1767) is a picture underwritten by period mobility, taking shape in Rome, only to travel back, as did Barry, to England (fig. 34). Painted early in the Irish artist's five years of study in Rome between 1766 and 1771, the work was a product of the nexus of travel, the experience of art in the context of

public museum collections, and its power to transfix and perhaps also transform. A masterful depiction of a painting within a painting, Barry captures his own likeness as if in the midst of portraying his Roman artist colleagues: James Paine Jr. (1745–1829), a British sculptor and architect, and Dominique Lefèvre (ca. 1737–1769), a student of Joseph-Marie Vien and *pensionnaire* at the French Academy in Rome thanks to his Prix de Rome win in 1761. Looming behind the three figures on the canvas—and notionally behind the viewer thanks to the picture's mirror logic—is the shadowy form of the Belvedere Torso, whose monumental scale is amplified by its appearance at the top of the composition.

In this first of his gripping series of self-portraits, Barry appears under the sign of the Torso, a work admired by the artist as the apex (here at once literally and figuratively) of artistic achievement. Early on in his letters from Rome, Barry singled out the Torso for its minute attention to the same sort of “close anatomical investigation” still invaluable for artists. Indeed, in this letter, the sculpture triggers the artist's extended reflections on mythology, the scientific study of muscles. And it seems safe to suspect that the Torso was one of the few antique statues (Barry indicates “seven or eight”) on whose “entire superiority” he reflected through extended study at the Belvedere, the Capitoline (where he acquired a license to copy), and elsewhere.<sup>138</sup> Although Barry described his study of the antique as preparation to copy after Raphael's frescoes at the Villa Farnesina, he had earlier suggested a rather different hierarchy in asserting Raphael's inadequacy when compared to ancient figural sculpture, whether beautiful, grand, or sublime. In the final analysis, Barry wrote, “as to the Torso, the Laocoön, and such like characters, [Raphael] appears not at all qualified to succeed in





FIGURE 34 James Barry, *Self-Portrait with James Paine and Dominique Lefèvre (with the Belvedere Torso)*, ca. 1767. Oil on canvas. National Portrait Gallery, London. Photo © National Portrait Gallery, London.

them.”<sup>139</sup> Barry’s *Self-Portrait* took shape during a period when the artist was fully, even ecstatically, given over to copying the antique. In his letters to patrons Edmund Burke and Fenn Sleight, he described the “inspiration . . . caught from the antique” in terms of “that ardor, and I know not how to call it, that state of mind one gets on studying the antique.” Barry described this altogether new experience as an alternative reality: “A fairy land it is, in which one is apt to imagine he can gather treasures, which neither Raffael nor Michael Angelo were possessed of.”<sup>140</sup>

Even as he frequented museum collections at the Capitol and the Vatican, Barry was also a participant in the burgeoning trade in copies and reproductions. The topic of casts surfaces repeatedly in his letters from Italy. Writing to Burke, a member of parliament and philosopher, Barry allowed that while he was not particularly pleased to hear about the founding of the Royal Academy, “a fine collection of gessos or casts of the antique, and the medals, sulphurs, books, &c. they intend accumulating, will be an acquisition of the greatest value to the public.” “For my own part,” he continued, “I should die of chagrin and melancholy in any place where there is not this, as my thoughts day and night run on nothing else but the antique.”<sup>141</sup> Writing in May 1769 to Reynolds, the inaugural president of the Royal Academy, Barry’s fourth and final postscript implored Reynolds to have “casts and moulds made for the academy.”<sup>142</sup> This was a call to action Barry himself clearly heeded. As he prepared to depart from Italy, he assembled “five cases, which, except for a few things in my head, contain all that I am worth in the world.” At the top of Barry’s itemized list, we find “a Laocoon, the Torso of the Belvedere, the fighting Gladiator.”<sup>143</sup>

Barry’s enthusiasm for the antique did not diminish upon his return to London, where he was elected to the Royal Academy and later assumed the position of professor of painting. In his lectures delivered at the Royal Academy between 1784 and 1799, Barry continued to extoll the Torso’s supremacy, describing it as an “unparalleled piece of excellence,” “unique” in its “perfection,” insofar as “there is nothing that can be put into the same class with it.” In his view, the Belvedere Torso was “the most complete, perfect system, or arrangement of parts, that can possibly be imagined, for the idea of corporeal force, which is was intended to represent.”<sup>144</sup> Academicians and students in the audience of the Council Chamber at Somerset House would have been surrounded by casts after the antique as they listened.<sup>145</sup> Henry Singleton depicted just such a commingling in his 1795 painting of *The Royal Academicians in General Assembly*, which shows the Council Chamber packed with Academicians whose horseshoe grouping is framed by plaster casts: from the Apollo Belvedere on the far right, to the hulking Laocöon group, and the Belvedere Torso on the far left (fig. 35). The Borghese Gladiator and Venus de’ Medici occupy slightly secondary positions in the rear. Yet another iteration of the Torso appeared on an altogether more intimate scale, emblazoned on the “gold and silver Medals annually distributed as premiums to the Students.”<sup>146</sup>

While not captured by Singleton, the Torso’s place in the Council Chamber would have been amplified in a second iteration on the ceiling, where it was recapitulated in Kaufmann’s allegorical composition devoted to “Design.” As a period guide by Joseph Baretti explains, Design, one of a set of four female allegorical figures representing the *Elements of Art*, was represented by “a Female seated, and studiously employed in delineating the famous





FIGURE 35 Henry Singleton, *The Royal Academicians in General Assembly*, 1795. Oil on canvas. Royal Academy, London. Photo © Royal Academy of Arts, London (John Hammond).

antique Torso, which by way of excellence is called, *The School of Michelangelo*.” As Baretti (whose portrait by Barry was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1773) emphasizes, by the 1780s the Torso was sometimes called the “*Torso* of Michelangelo, so emphatically called, because Michelangelo termed it *His School*, thinking it the very best remain of Greek Sculpture that the World could show.”<sup>147</sup> Something of the Torso-to-Michelangelo trajectory is indicated in John Runciman’s 1767 *Self-Portrait*, which appears to be a rejoinder to Barry’s self-portrait with Paine and Lefèvre in which Michelangelo’s *Day* has supplanted the position reserved for the Torso in Barry’s painting. And as William Pressly remarks, Blanchet’s *Portrait of Barry*, likely executed in 1767, configures the sitter’s body in a

similar pose, though it is unclear which picture was created first.<sup>148</sup> For his part, Barry returned to the Torso for inspiration for numerous compositions: *The Education of Achilles* (ca. 1772), *Self-Portrait as Timanthes* (ca. 1780–1803), and his late, monumental *Birth of Pandora* (1791–1804).<sup>149</sup> In this sense, Barry’s early self-portrait at once asserts the artist’s admiration for the Belvedere Torso and his identification with it, insofar as emulation of the sculpture would shape his artistic output and pronouncements for decades to come.

Thanks to the inclusion of Paine and Lefèvre, Barry’s self-portrait offers a striking depiction of artistic collectivity forged in the shadow of the Torso, a noteworthy departure for an artist whose biography includes rather more narratives of



violent interpersonal rupture than of community building. Paine, whose distinctive features are recognizable in a 1769 print by Pariset, stands in the background.<sup>150</sup> The sculptor is close enough to the Torso to cast a shadow upon it and appears locked in contemplation. As Paine gazes upon the statue's massive chest, his left hand settles under his coat jacket and thus on his own chest in a gesture that elegantly emphasizes that this is a scene of connection between sculptor and sculpture; identification is doubly certified here, at once visually and by way of touch.

Lefèvre, in the middle ground, holds a wooden palette (conspicuously absent of paint) in his left hand while his right fingers the black cord of his cloak. Staring in the direction of a large canvas that bisects the right edge of the composition, he appears consumed by his thoughts, which presumably are focused on the translation of the three-dimensional artifact towering above him into what will ultimately take two-dimensional shape through the deployment of brush and pigment. Whereas Barry's own visage is summoned up in compelling, quasi-living form—from the vivid crimson of his jacket to the expressive dishevelment of his hair and piercing address of his eyes and pursed mouth—Paine and Lefèvre are rendered in relatively rough, monochrome fashion. This disjunction at once points to the “two levels of reality” virtuosically crafted by Barry in the picture, even as it emphasizes the formal continuities between the three greyish white forms of painter, sculptor, and sculpture.<sup>151</sup> Indeed, we might push the formal and notional connection further. In Barry's tautly compressed rendition of his colleagues, we grasp remarkably little of their bodies. Effectively reduced to studies of heads and hands, Paine and Lefèvre counterbalance precisely what the sculpture lacks.

The two figures' state of relative painterly unfinish further contributes to the continuities between them and the rough—and, of course, technically partial—sculptural form.<sup>152</sup>

An ode to the essentially rapt nature of the study of the antique articulated so often in Barry's letters from Italy, the picture likewise conjures up a Roman topography punctuated by venues in which artists could come together in shared study of the human figure, whether in the guise of life models, plaster casts, or actual antiquities. During his years in Rome, Barry attended evening sessions at the French Academy at the Palazzo Mancini and at the Accademia del' Nudo in the Capitoline.<sup>153</sup> In the study session depicted here, Barry is not the only one transformed by an encounter with the Torso. This point is unsuitably hammered home by the fact that Lefèvre's eyes, which are the key individuating features of the profile portrait, are rendered sculpturally. Tightly juxtaposed with Barry's dancing, light-catching eyes, Lefèvre's are, by contrast, blank, smooth sockets redolent of a classical bust.

Lefèvre's connection to the Torso would have resonated at another level as well, insofar as at the time of Barry's painting, Lefèvre was at work on a commissioned painting of *Deianeira and the Centaur Nessus*, an episode from the life of Hercules. While the painting's current location is unknown, Lefèvre's composition no doubt followed in the footsteps of Louis-Jean-François Lagrenée, whose 1755 *morceau de réception* was subsequently exhibited at that year's Salon, and the earlier Guido Reni, both of whom executed canvases of the same episode. Both works depict Hercules saving his bride, Deianeira, from the centaur Nessus, who, in Ovid's telling, fell for her and attempted to abduct her after offering her transport across a river. In Lagrenée's and Reni's hands, Hercules is shown standing on

the far side of the river with the bow and arrow that will ultimately kill Nessus.

While the Torso would at first glance appear an unlikely source of inspiration for the depiction of a fully formed Hercules, in Winckelmann's celebrated description of 1759 (which had been translated into English by 1767 and twice published by Fuseli), the art historian heralds imaginative completion and, more important, animation as the necessary byproduct of sustained, thoughtful contemplation of the Torso. As Winckelmann asserts in his "Description of the Torso in the Belvedere in Rome," "A first glance will perhaps allow you to see nothing but an unformed stone; but if you are able to penetrate the secrets of art, then you will see a miracle in it—if you consider this work with a calm eye. Then Hercules will appear to you as if he were in the middle of all of his labours, and the hero and the god will simultaneously become visible in the work." Having thus thrown down the gauntlet, Winckelmann harnesses this short, "ideal" treatment to demonstrate his own sensitive beholding, over the course of which the extant traces of the Torso instigate narrative associations with Hercules' labors and ultimately suggest a complete reanimation of the sculpture/god. "If it seems incomprehensible to locate a thinking power in some part of the body besides the head," Winckelmann observes, "then one learns here how the hand of a creative master is capable of animating matter."<sup>154</sup> Barry was a reader of Winckelmann, and his canvas is redolent of the "miracles" promised by Winckelmann, miracles in this instance founded upon artistic identification and transformation.<sup>155</sup> At the same time, as much as the Torso is animated here as the magnetic focal point for artistic inspiration and homosocial enthusiasm, Barry does not shy away from the other side of the coin of antique encounter in that his

painting transforms two of his contemporaries into quasi-sculptural forms.<sup>156</sup>

### PATCH'S VENUS

If Barry's painting tends to emphasize the imagined promises rather than the perils of emulative and transformative encounters with the antique, other artists took a different approach. Painted in the years just prior to Barry's self-portrait, Patch's *A Gathering of Dilettanti in a Sculpture Hall* (ca. 1760–61) provocatively opens onto the transformative potential of grand-tour taste-making under the influence of Winckelmann's experiential aesthetics (fig. 36). A bitingly funny and deeply canny canvas, Patch's painting provides a visual counterpoint—albeit in a sharply satiric tone and with an eye to ostensibly transgressive desire—to the worry articulated in Eaton's account of the "unfortunate damsel" who lost her heart, and mind, to the Apollo Belvedere.

Patch's canvas reverberates within a veritable echo chamber of pictures in which tourists are positioned in relationship to ancient figural sculpture in tacitly and explicitly transformative encounters, as in the portraits of Willoughby and Dundas (see figs. 14 and 15). Like others of Patch's multifigure conversation pictures executed between roughly 1760 and 1774, *Dilettanti in a Sculpture Hall* is, as its title explicitly announces, a product of grand-tour culture. In contrast to Patch's other paintings, however, in the *Dilettanti* picture, sculpture reigns—at once spatially anchoring the panoramic composition and constituting the painting's ideological moorings. The picture thus takes its place among an impressive body of grand-tour imagery focused on dilettanti and sculpture or, more broadly, encounters with the antique.



FIGURE 36 Thomas Patch, *A Gathering of Dilettanti in a Sculpture Hall*, ca. 1760–61. Oil on canvas. Brinsley Ford Collection, London.

Despite its very different deployment of figures, sculpture, and space, Patch's *Dilettanti in a Sculpture Hall* is usefully illuminated by the portrait of Dundas insofar as here, too, the painting operates in the interstices between real and imagined spaces. The canvas likewise engages with period discourses on the transformative effects of grand-tour travel and artistic education, albeit in an entirely different tone. If Rome looms large for Batoni's portrait, the city invoked by Patch's canvas is that second city of antique sculpture in the age of the grand tour: Florence. In Florence, the famed Tribuna of the Uffizi housed masterworks of ancient sculpture together with Renaissance paintings and, prior to roughly 1767 to 1779, treasures from the natural world.<sup>157</sup> The *Dilettanti* canvas depicts five of the Tribuna's internationally famous sculptures: the Arrotino (knife-sharpener), the

Wrestlers, the Venus de' Medici, the Mercury, and the Dancing Faun.<sup>158</sup> In a pictorial move not unlike that of Batoni, Patch's selection of these particular objects conjures the specter of the Uffizi, even as the relatively spartan setting of the hall creates a curious tension between familiar objects and their architectural envelope. In his *Tribuna of the Uffizi* (1772–77), Zoffany quite differently deploys the effect of the real to render the famed interior as a *horror vacui* of identification, an interior pulsating with an accretive sedimentation of sculptures, paintings, and tourists (fig. 37).<sup>159</sup>

Zoffany's canvas may be seen as a subtle reflection on taste, insofar as it functions as a vital record of the social and artistic pleasures afforded by travel to Italy.<sup>160</sup> By contrast, Patch's canvas deploys an emphatically caricatural depiction of its twenty-five





figures in the service of knowing critique. Indeed, artists in Patch's circle explored how art-historical work was intimately—indeed literally—connected to practice in caricature.<sup>161</sup> Reynolds's parody of Raphael's *School of Athens* is an excellent case in point. Painted in Rome in 1751, when the artist was living with Patch at the Palazzo Zuccari, the canvas commemorates this milieu by including Patch among the assembled figures.<sup>162</sup> As in Reynolds's picture, in Patch's *Dilettanti* humor is the product of an insider's view of art. Working in a satiric register quite distinct from the logic of identification and

transformation so fully absorbed in Batoni's portrait of Dundas, Patch invokes the familiar grand-tour rhetoric of ideality and absorptive looking in order to figure its potentially transgressive outcomes.<sup>163</sup>

A crucial node in these operations sits at the center of the composition, where Patch has positioned the Venus de' Medici, but with an important alteration to the sculpture's usual depiction. The familiar forward address of the figure is here modified so that "she" turns away from the picture plane to address the man who clammers ungracefully upon her. This figure is none other than the artist

FIGURE 37 Johann Zoffany, *Tribuna of the Uffizi*, 1772–77. Oil on canvas. Royal Collection Trust. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

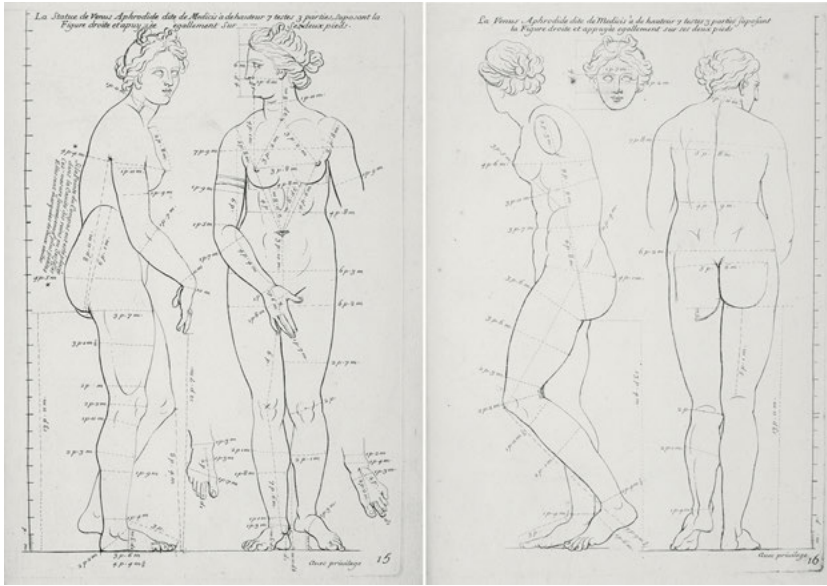


FIGURE 38 Gérard Audran, *Medici Venus*. From *Les proportions du corps humain, mesurées sur les plus belles figures de l'antiquité* (Paris, 1683).

himself, who occupies the perspectival center delineated by the apsidal niche of the background, rather than the Venus.

When Patch was at work on this painting, the Venus de' Medici was among the most beloved and recognizable ancient sculptures, heralded in both literature and art as the queen of either beauty or desire. Yet Patch appears oblivious, immune even, to its charms. That the physical contact he depicts is emphatically not an amorous advance is announced by the fact that Patch wields a compass, one end of which is planted squarely in the mouth of the Venus. The remarkable gesture is redolent of Zoffany's depiction of artist Richard Cosway in a strikingly proprietary and aggressive pose—with cane planted on the pubis of a plaster cast of an antique Venus—in *The Royal Academicians* (1771–72).<sup>164</sup> Employed in the service of the scrupulously accurate measuring essential to antiquarian study and to the process of copying (and scaling) sculpture, the compass draws our attention to the statue's existence within an international market in antiquities in which Patch participated as restorer, collector, and dealer.

Patch's deployment of the compass in the *Dilettanti* picture, however, may resonate with more than the artist's role in the contemporary antiquities trade. The tendency, common among seventeenth- and eighteenth-century artists concerned to shore up their "scientific" interests over other less valorized enthusiasms, is vividly on view in Gérard Audran's meticulous anatomical drawings of the Venus de' Medici, published in *Les proportions du corps humain, mesurées sur les plus belles figures de l'antiquité* (Paris, 1683) (fig. 38). As Bruce Redford observes, "Audran presents his sculptural specimens as specimens, to be exposed from multiple vantage points and dissected through painstaking measurement, without the slightest hint of stylistic grace or concession to aesthetic pleasure."<sup>165</sup> Having asserted that he is free from sexual interest, such a viewer is, in John Barrell's description, "free to gaze, and gaze again, and, if he can get close enough to the original, he evinces the innocence of his pleasure by getting out his calipers and footrule."<sup>166</sup> Patch's compass-gesture thus provides a framework for understanding the artist's relations with the female figure as professionalized and instrumental. Accordingly, "her" allure is managed through the emphasis on the sculpture's status as an object caught in the interconnected webs of study and commerce.

A useful counterpoint to Patch's self-depiction with the Venus and compass, Jean-Baptiste Greuze's *Portrait of Claude-Henri Watelet* (1765) depicts the philanthropist, collector, practicing engraver, and pedagogue Watelet in the process of working on his *L'art de peindre* (Paris, 1760) (fig. 39). His attention fixed on a bronze reduction of the Venus de' Medici, Watelet appears to have paused in the process of analyzing the sculpture's proportions, which would be recorded in an engraving in his book. That text included an extended poem in which Watelet pairs



the sculpture's beauty with the necessity for "fixing these calculations that Art dares to require."<sup>167</sup>

While the intellectual nature of Watelet's attention is underscored by the glimpse of a reversed drawing of the sculpture in the pages of the album before him, Greuze cleverly suggests something of an interpersonal exchange through the composition's balance of a reciprocity of gazes and by its deployment of a mirror logic of gestures. In the meeting of two gleaming figures, the diminutive, exposed female figure and *amateur* spectacularly clad in a grey satin dressing gown that shines to the point of appearing silvered, there is no doubt that *he* is the viewer from whom Venus modestly shields her body.<sup>168</sup>

Patch's compass likewise orients viewers to particular aspects of the artist's identity. Indeed, the compass seems to have functioned as a sort of personal emblem for Patch. This identification is suggested by a 1768 self-portrait in which Patch once again pictured himself with the implement, in this case measuring the distance between the forehead and mouth of a sculpted head. But quite differently than in Greuze's portrait of Watelet, Patch's depiction in the *Dilettanti* painting engages with the main trends in period commentary on the Venus, which tended to a "blend of gloating and pedantry."<sup>169</sup>

*Dilettanti in a Sculpture Hall* does not simply present a view of the artist as obdurately insensitive to beauty. As Patch grabs onto the Venus's outstretched arm for balance, her hand responds with a frozen spasm of resistance; the antipathy is evidently mutual. Plunging his calipers into the sculpture's mouth, Patch's "tastelessness" turns on his imperviousness to the female goods on offer (fig. 40). The artist betrays no longing, and the Venus remains an inanimate object, antithetical to the Pygmalion topos. In this regard, too, Patch's depiction parts ways

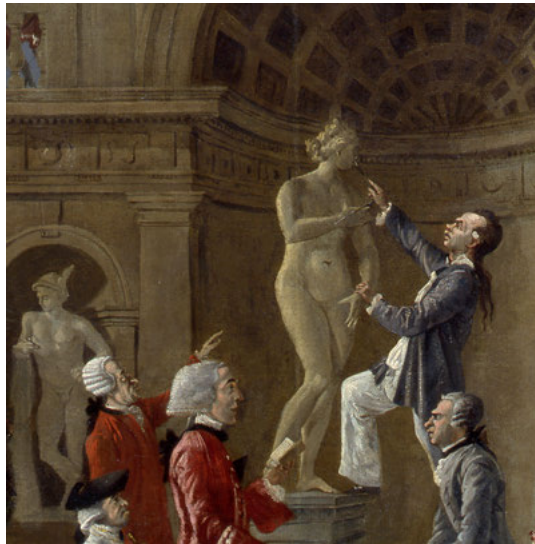


with the vast majority of writing about the sculpture by antiquarians, historians, and tourists alike. This departure is of particular interest at a moment when aesthetic appreciation and connoisseurship were increasingly understood in terms of subjective receptivity. Patch was, in fact, by the early 1770s, extremely well-connected within an Italian—and international—community of scholars, dealers, and art historians.<sup>170</sup> Given that Patch was a restorer, picture-negotiator, and author of publications of

FIGURE 39 Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Portrait of Claude-Henri Watelet*, 1765. Oil on canvas. Musée du Louvre, Paris. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.



FIGURE 40 Thomas Patch, *A Gathering of Dilettanti in a Sculpture Hall*, ca. 1760–61, detail. Oil on canvas. Brinsley Ford Collection, London.



engravings after Masaccio, Giotto, and Lorenzo Ghiberti (published 1770–74), his determination to depict himself as an unfeeling viewer of art is striking. We might understand Patch's self-mockery to suggest that the only taste in question is that designated by the marketplace of copies—a cunning betrayal of the compact of aesthetic experience.

Patch's depiction in Zoffany's *Tribuna* offers another framework within which to evaluate his anchoring role in the *Dilettanti's* topography of interested looking. Standing prominently in the foreground of Zoffany's picture, Patch is paired with another canonical Venus: Titian's *Venus of Urbino*. Patch's relation to the monumental nude is activated by his left hand, curiously pointing away from the Venus and toward the gleaming sculptural group behind him, a gesture that Ronald Paulson has unforgettably described as Patch "holding on to the *Venus* but thinking about the *Wrestlers*."<sup>171</sup> This motion (and its interpretation) point back to a vital aspect of Patch's biography. By 1751 Patch had run

afoul of the bishop of Tivoli, and in October 1755 he was ordered to leave the Papal States precipitously.<sup>172</sup> That Patch's sexual orientation tended toward men and thus that his "offence" was sodomy is now widely assumed in scholarly accounts.<sup>173</sup> A recently surfaced description by Edward Gibbon of a 1764 visit to Patch's studio recounts surveying drawings after "obscene [antique] medals" that reflected the ancients'—and possibly also Patch's—taste, coyly summoned by Gibbon (in French) as "rear entrances for their visits, even to women."<sup>174</sup> These accounts are germane to Patch's self-presentation, insofar as they are strikingly resonant with the dynamics of sculptural looking that punctuate the painting's panoramic composition. Flanked by two male nudes, the Venus is clearly overshadowed, not by the *Wrestlers* this time, but rather by the *Arrotino*, which clearly attracts the lion's share of attentive, and arguably transformative, viewing.

While not singled out for praise by Winckelmann, the *Arrotino's* evidently magnetic power nevertheless speaks to what has long been recognized as a distinctive feature of the Winckelmannian program and its particular logic of ideal form.<sup>175</sup> Quite unlike Burke's rigorous gendering of the sublime and beautiful in *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of the Sublime and Beautiful* of 1757, Winckelmann positioned the male sculptural body alone at the apex of artistic achievement, a self-sufficient source of the beautiful and sublime. As the special province of effeminate masculinity, the smooth-limbed, youthful beauty of the Apollo Belvedere—"the highest ideal of art among all the works of antiquity"—trumped the burly masculinity of the *Farnese Hercules* and the *Belvedere Torso*, as well as depictions of virile femininity.<sup>176</sup> By the time of Patch's painting, Winckelmann had begun to establish the terms of a specifically intersubjective

sculptural encounter, famously demonstrated in his remarks on the *Apollo Belvedere*, which conclude with the author's own transformation into "Pygmalion's beauty."<sup>177</sup> In this paradigmatic episode, Winckelmann is not just moved but transformed.

If Winckelmann's influence can in part be measured by the canonization of the sculptural ideals and aesthetic terminology he celebrated, the embrace of his writing by grand tourists was not without its challenges. Chard has demonstrated that tourist responses to classical sculpture adopted the Winckelmannian paradigm by understanding the emblematic classical body as one that, while male, worked to combine "'masculine' strength with 'feminine' softness . . . [and] tempered force with grace." Even so, Chard notes the anxious repudiation of "effeminate" sculpture typical of writing by travelers who evidently struggled with the desire to praise effeminate masculinity and indeed to recognize such bodies as "a source of pleasure," even while "keep[ing] the threat of effeminacy at bay."<sup>178</sup> To this end, male writers employed the rhetorical strategy of referring to the aesthetic responses of *female* spectators. Writers like "Lancelot Temple" (John Armstrong) could, in 1771, assert, "The ANTINOUS is a well-shaped, insipid young man. But the APOLLO! If I was a woman, I should be more in love with the Apollo than as a man I was in love with the VENUS [de' Medici]. For I have seen many women whom I should prefer to the Venus; but never such a beautiful graceful sublime figure of a man as the Apollo is."<sup>179</sup>

Following his banishment from Rome, Patch counted among his intimates Horace Mann, British minister in Florence, about whom one contemporary wrote, "I call these Fellows 'finger-twirlers,' meaning a decent word for Sodomites."<sup>180</sup> Clothed in a scarlet jacket and pictured to the left of the *Venus* in Patch's painting, Mann offers an

apparently encouraging gesture to Patch, whose artistic *déshabillé* underscores the sartorial excesses that surround him. Across the foreground of the painting, which is large enough to have at one point been employed as a room divider, Patch has interspersed antique sculpture with male figures whose distinctive garb—from their *toupée* wigs down to their dainty heeled shoes, by way of their *habits à la française*, black silk wig bags, canes and swords, and exquisitely trimmed suits cut from fine continental textiles—announced their status as "macaronis," men participating in what was, in the 1760s and 1770s, up-to-the-minute transnational fashion.<sup>181</sup> This period witnessed the explosion of so-called macaroni imagery (fig. 41). Patch's depiction of the macaroni strategically underlines the urbanity and cosmopolitanism of the men depicted, their physical itineracy worn, as it were, on their sleeves. Patch has trained considerable attention on the men's fashionable accessories; yet another valence of the picture's humor turns on the phallic punning constituted by the picture's many precisely posed swords and walking sticks.

Arranged in poses redolent of fashion plates, Patch's macaroni men embody a refined sensitivity to self-presentation, with intimations of a vigorous and exclusive *self*-regard. By the 1760s, such enthusiasm for fashion—a ubiquitous feature in text and images devoted to the figure of the macaroni—was understood as running counter to normative heterosexual masculinity.<sup>182</sup> As invoked in visual images, literary texts, and theatrical productions, macaroni legibility turned upon the elision of French and Italian fashion with effeminacy, making the macaroni into the ultimate gender-confounding specimen. In 1770, an article in the *Oxford Magazine* observed, "There is indeed a kind of animal, neither male nor female, a thing of the neuter gender, lately started up amongst

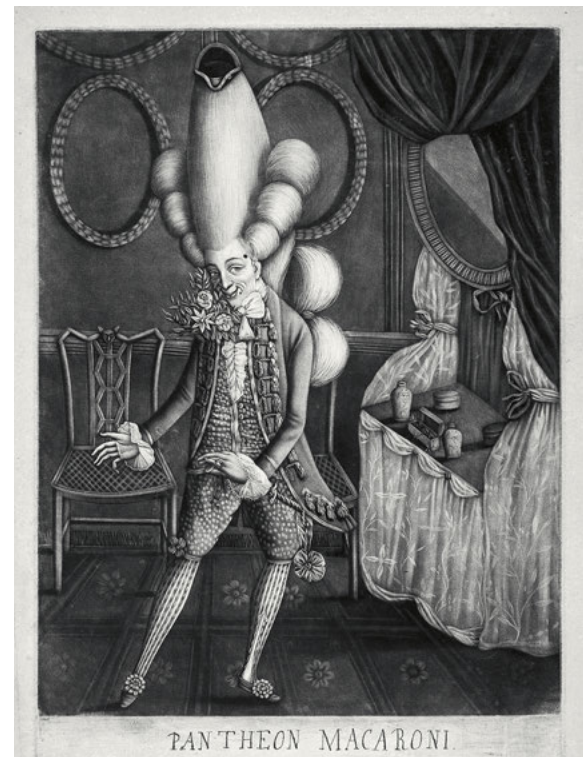
FIGURE 41 Mary and Matthew Darly, *My Lord Tip-Toe, Just Arrived from Monkey Land*, 1771. Engraving. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Elisha Whittelsey Collection, Elisha Whittelsey Fund, 2011. Photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art, www.metmuseum.org.



FIGURE 42 Philip Dawe, *The Macaroni: A Real Character at the Late Masquerade*, 1773. Engraving. British Museum, London. Photo © The Trustees of the British Museum.

us. It is called Macaroni."<sup>183</sup> In some cases, macaroni caricatures alluded fairly unambiguously to sexual tastes. In a 1773 macaroni print by Philip Dawe, *The Macaroni: A Real Character at the Late Masquerade*, the figure's sexual proclivities are signaled by a decorative element on the cane chair of the background (fig. 42). Depicting a cat's head, it references the common parlance for the younger, passive partner of a homosexual couple, the "catamite."<sup>184</sup> The vociferousness of Dawe's print serves as a reminder that macaroni imagery took shape against the backdrop of high-profile sodomitical cases resulting in pillory, execution, and exile, alongside the acceleration of protohomophobic attacks in decades marked by a shift from the "gender play" that distinguished the earlier century to the "gender panic" on display in its final decades.<sup>185</sup>

Our understanding of Patch's depiction of urbane, cosmopolitan male fashion—and the particular elements that constituted the immediately recognizable, transnational fashionability of the macaroni—is significantly amplified when set against contemporary discourses that brought together fashion, travel, and sexuality. In these decades, the male grand tourist was implicated in threatening ways through period discourses on sexual deviancy and national identity that focused particular attention to his border-crossing practices and his destinations in France and, above all, Italy, a site particularly associated with sodomy in the eighteenth century.<sup>186</sup> Recognizable by his effeminacy, the macaroni was understood to have his cultural and geographic origins in Italy. The site of





antique artistic achievement and cultural richness, Italy was thus at the same time a place where male beauty and its appreciation became particularly charged aesthetic terrain that threatened, all too easily, to signal perversion rather than ideality.

Almost without exception, recent reflections on Patch's *Dilettanti* have concurred that the centerpiece of the painting's satirical thrust resides in the absence of interested looking at sculpture by figures who are "more interested in socializing and appearing fashionable."<sup>187</sup> But Patch is up to more here than simply indicting the immunity of the assembled group to the aesthetic lures on offer. Despite their effective erasure in scholarly accounts, Patch indeed depicts overtly interested, even riveted, viewers. While none of the men appear to take in the sight of the Wrestlers, the sculpture's equivocatingly intertwined bodies preside over a trio of male couples organized at its base, rendering the sculpture a thematic anchor for the drama that transpires on the other side of the canvas (fig. 43). There, the Arrotino works as a kind of magnet for interested looking not unlike Zoffany's cluster of dilettanti who regard the Venus de' Medici with faces aflush with interest far more than intellectual. Lord Cowper leans against the Arrotino's pedestal with a dreamy yet determined fixity of purpose, while to his right, a tourist unnecessarily augments his natural vision with a magnifying tool. The circuitry of admiration is rounded out on the left side of the sculpture by the diminutive figure of a young grand tourist accompanied by an older, and apparently disconcertingly wiser, Italian guide who directs his charge's attention to the nude before them.

Patch is at his most ruthlessly satiric in his invocation of the motif of the bear and bear-leader, familiar from literary and artistic accounts, such as Thomas Rowlandson's watercolor *Bear and*

*Bear-Leader Passing the Hôtel d'Angleterre* (1776), in which tourists are satirized as equals to the trained bears that were familiar elements of urban entertainment in eighteenth-century Europe (fig. 44).<sup>188</sup> This recognizable subject would have had particular resonance with an eighteenth-century recognition of Winckelmann's interest in Greek pederastic culture, his lifelong commitment to teaching young men, and his insistence that an instinct for male beauty be cultivated in youth, not to mention his role as cicerone and his relationship to an Italian aristocratic, libertine milieu.<sup>189</sup> In Patch's painting, the bear and bear-leader motif's unpalatable associations come through in the guide's grotesque, disconcertingly toothy visage. When paired with the miniature tourist and the gleaming marble sculpture, the guide's mouth takes on a decidedly unsettling aspect. Is it the sculpture or the ephebic male tourist that is good enough to eat?

Patch's *Dilettanti in a Sculpture Hall* stands as an ideal culminating point in this chapter's attempt to outline an eighteenth-century ontology of the antique. A collector and dealer, Patch had a view onto canonical antique works that is explicitly framed in his painting in terms of mobility. Above and beyond the imaginative relocation of familiar sculptures, the picture frames Patch as intimately involved in the business of art's movement—both that of "original" works and copies. Patch insists on this aspect of his identity in his compass-wielding self-presentation. Of course, mobility, differently construed, likewise subtends this and many others of Patch's conversation pictures, which capture the movement of elite gentlemen in the age of the grand tour. Staging an episode of measurement in the service of reproduction, the picture announces that mutability is central among its preoccupations. This focus is further elaborated in the forms that

FIGURE 43 Thomas Patch, *A Gathering of Dilettanti in a Sculpture Hall*, ca. 1760–61, detail. Oil on canvas. Brinsley Ford Collection, London.

FIGURE 44 Thomas Rowlandson, *Bear and Bear-Leader Passing the Hôtel d'Angleterre*, 1776. Pencil, pen and brown ink and watercolor. Private collection. Photo: Christie's.



give rise to the picture's humor: Venus recoils, and the marble is muddied. And finally, and perhaps most significantly, in his satiric depiction of artists, tourists, and bear-leaders, each poised in relationship to canonical sculptural objects, Patch highlights the transformative potential—at once aesthetic and erotic—of encounters with ancient sculpture in the context of the grand tour. Exploiting prevailing anxieties about how the exterior envelope of fashion might signal deviant masculinity, the picture's humor turns on its canny invocation of a central tension at the heart of eighteenth-century artistic culture and grand tour encounters: the fine line between the sensitive enactment and performance of taste and the dangerous absorption and occupation of the (homo) erotic sensibility that underwrote the Winckelmannian program. In this sense, the work's satiric bite is only fully understandable when interpreted expressly as a reflection on the transformative potential of encounters with sculpture.





